

# PRO TEM

*Presidents Pro Tempore of the United States Senate since 1789*





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110th Congress, 2d Session  
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# Foreword

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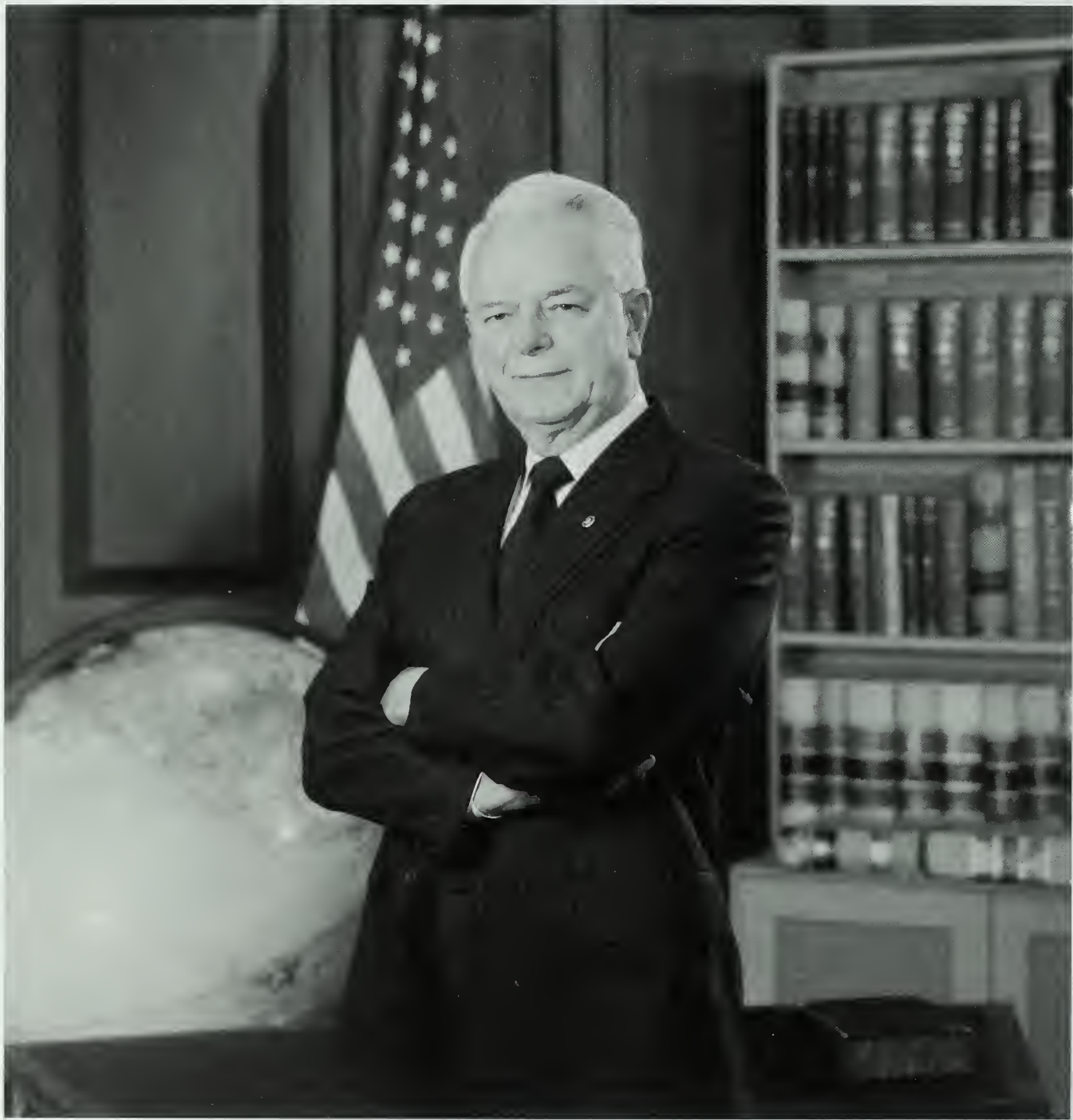
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**P**resident pro tempore Robert C. Byrd's reverence for the constitutional prerogatives, time-tested procedures, and unifying traditions of the United States Senate prompted the creation of this book. The 86th president pro tempore to serve since 1789 and the only modern-era occupant of that post to serve four non-consecutive terms, Senator Byrd has for many years studied the office's origins and development with his characteristic thoroughness. In May 1980, as Senate majority leader, he addressed the topic in two carefully crafted Senate floor speeches. Nine years later, in his first term as president pro tempore, Senator Byrd expanded his earlier remarks. This extended essay appeared in the second volume of his encyclopedic *The Senate, 1789–1989*. There, he concluded, "The election of a senator to the office of president pro tempore has always been considered one of the highest honors offered to a senator by the Senate as a body. That honor has been bestowed upon a colorful and

significant group of senators during the past two centuries—men who stamped their imprint on the office and on their times." It is therefore most fitting that this book be inaugurated during the tenure of Senator Robert C. Byrd—the longest-serving senator in our nation's history.

This volume owes its existence to the expertise of the following members of the Senate Historical Office: Richard A. Baker, Mary Baumann, Beth Hahn, Betty K. Koed, Heather Moore, and Donald A. Ritchie. Dr. Koed prepared the essay surveying the development of the president pro tempore's office to 1890, and Dr. Ritchie brought the story from 1890 to our own times.

Nancy Erickson  
Secretary  
United States Senate





# Preface

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Observers of Congress are generally aware that the Senate president pro tempore is one of our national legislature's three constitutionally mandated officers. Few, however, are acquainted with the diversity of background and accomplishment of the 87 senators who have held that post during its 219-year span.

Since 1949, the Senate has awarded this high honor to its majority party's most senior member. Earlier times, however, occasionally witnessed spirited election contests for the office. Perhaps the most dramatic occurred in 1911. In that year, selection of a replacement for William Frye of Maine—who had served in that position for 15 of his 30 years in the Senate—caused a rancorous three-month disruption of Senate proceedings. Republican Jacob Gallinger of New Hampshire, candidate of the majority party, trailed Democrat Augustus Bacon of Georgia, with other senators receiving scattered votes. Under a long-standing practice that reflects the position's great stature, the president pro tempore must win a majority of all votes cast, rather than a mere plurality of those received by multiple candidates. In 1911, no candidate secured that majority. Additional rounds of voting over the ensuing weeks failed to produce a winner. Finally, on August 12, as pressure mounted for a decision on statehood for Arizona and New Mexico, and as senators agitated to escape Washington's wilting summer heat, party leaders brokered an unprecedented compromise. For the remainder of that Congress, Democrat Bacon would alternate as president pro tempore with Gallinger and three other Republicans. The intense emotions fired by this deadlock prompted the Senate to

publish extracts of its proceedings for all president pro tempore elections between 1789 and 1911. The resulting densely packed 250-page document, until now, has stood as the only Senate-produced account of the office's development.

A brief review of this new volume's pages will make clear that the Senate, from its earliest days, elected its most exemplary members to this office—individuals who brought to their rulings an extra measure of gravity and respect. What was said of President pro tempore James Hillhouse in 1801 could be applied to many of his successors. “He had that sort of natural leadership among his equals; that special faculty of influence over men, that power of winning their full confidence and of making them willing to follow where he led.”

I am most grateful to Secretary of the Senate Nancy Erickson and to the historians who work under her jurisdiction within the Senate Historical Office for preparing this engaging volume.

I also wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge the indispensable support of my own talented and loyal staff, including Barbara Videnieks, Betsy Dietz, and Martha Anne McIntosh.

Above all, I recognize the memory of my partner in nearly 69 years of life and love: my late wife, the coal miner's daughter—Erma Ora James.

Robert C. Byrd  
President Pro Tempore  
United States Senate



# The Formative Years, 1789–1860

Shortly after the United States Senate achieved its first quorum at Federal Hall in New York City on April 6, 1789, members elected a presiding officer to oversee the official counting of electoral ballots for the election of George Washington as president and John Adams as vice president. The Senate chose New Hampshire member John Langdon—merchant and delegate to the Continental Congress—to preside over the historic event. At its conclusion, the Senate formally elected Langdon president pro tempore. Langdon remained in that post for two weeks until Vice President Adams

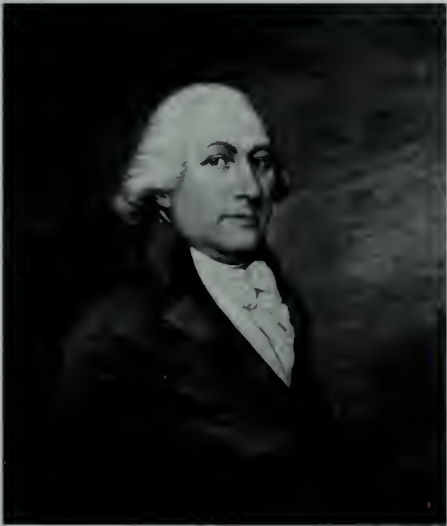
arrived in the Senate on April 21. When Langdon escorted Adams to the presiding officer's chair, he forfeited his own position as presiding officer.

As a constitutional officer of the Senate who is paid by legislative funds, the vice president was expected to preside full time. Absences were inevitable, however, due to difficulty in travel, illness, or other obligations. For that reason, the framers of the Constitution provided that in the absence of the vice president the Senate could choose a president

pro tempore to perform the duties of the chair. The Constitution did not define the duties, powers, and responsibilities of that office. Events, personalities, and the Senate's evolving needs would shape its early development. Over many decades, the Senate's president pro tempore would evolve into a position of respect and prestige, providing institutional stability and continuity.

In the Senate's earliest years, the president pro tempore—chosen on a temporary basis (*pro tempore* meaning “for the time being” in Latin)—was selected for personal characteristics, such as popularity, reliability, and mastery of the Senate's rules and procedures. The tenure of the president pro tempore ended with the appearance of the vice president, so terms of service typically were short and sporadic in nature. John Langdon served four separate terms from 1789 to 1793. During the Fourth Congress, there were three presidents pro tempore. Five served during the Fifth Congress, and another four served during the Sixth Congress. In all, more than a dozen senators held the office during the Senate's first decade. In the years that followed, a few served for longer periods, due to the death of a vice president or when a vice president succeeded to the presidency. When John Tyler became president following the 1841 death of President William Henry Harrison, for example, three presidents pro tempore served throughout the next four years.

Precedents set by John Adams as the Senate's constitutional president and John Langdon as the first president pro tempore shaped the early role of the presiding officer. Adams initially sought an active role in the Senate's daily debates, but the position of vice president soon



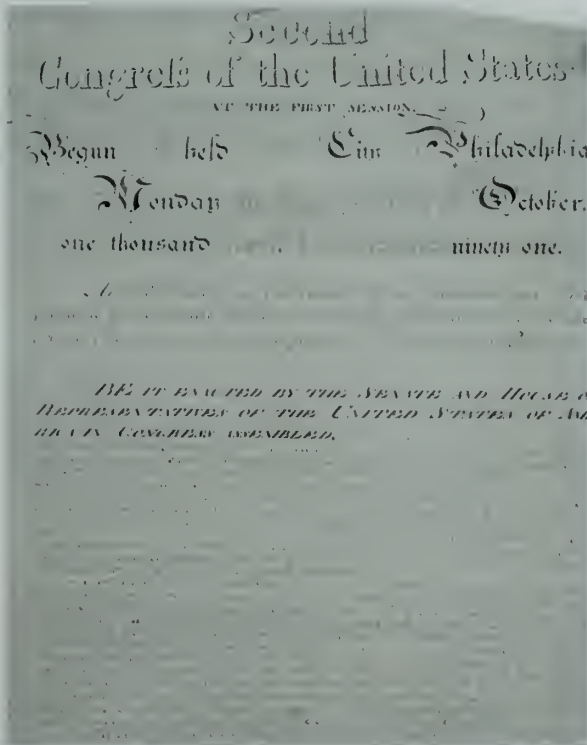
John Langdon served as the Senate's first president pro tempore.



*The Senate met in this chamber inside Congress Hall, in Philadelphia, PA, from 1790 to 1800.*

became distinctly neutral. Unlike its counterpart on the other side of Capitol Hill—the Speaker of the House—the president pro tempore did not evolve into a position of party leadership, nor did it share the vice president’s constitutional prerogative—the ability to break a tie vote.

Unlike the vice president, the president pro tempore is an elected member of the U.S. Senate, able to speak or vote on any issue. Selected by the Senate at large, the president pro tempore has enjoyed many privileges and some limited powers. In 1792, the Succession Act placed the president pro tempore directly behind the vice president in the line to fill a presidential vacancy. Beginning in 1812, presidents pro tempore began receiving additional pay during the absence of a vice president. They have received a higher level of compensation than other senators since 1816. In the 1840s, following the elevation of Vice



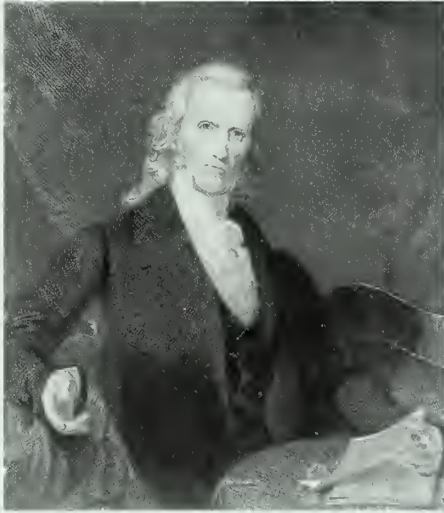
The Presidential Succession Act of 1792 placed the president pro tempore directly behind the vice president in the line to fill a presidential vacancy.

President John Tyler to the presidency, the Senate began paying the president pro tempore the equivalent of a vice president’s salary. This policy remained in place until 1969 when the president pro tempore’s salary was fixed at the same level as the majority and minority leaders. During the 39th Congress, Senator Lafayette Foster was compensated for service as senator, president pro tempore, and—during an extended vacancy in the vice presidency—vice president.

Although the Senate recognized the need to monetarily compensate the president pro tempore for his service, particularly during a vacancy in the vice presidency, it was less comfortable with allowing the position to influence the Senate’s legislative affairs. Beginning in 1820, the Senate allowed the president pro tempore to name other senators to perform the duties of the chair in his absence, but limited that service by terminating it with adjournment. By 1856, the *Congressional Globe* identified members who served as presiding officers in the absence of a president pro tempore.

Perhaps the most important role gained by the president pro tempore during this time period was the selection of members and chairmen of the Senate’s standing committees. The 1820s brought a new level of activity to the Senate, as monumental debates over territorial expansion and the future of slavery in America played out on a daily basis in the Senate Chamber. The resulting bustle of business prompted senators to seek more efficient ways to complete Senate tasks. In 1823, the Senate abandoned a system of electing each individual chairman and members of a committee, choosing instead the time-saving device of providing that “all committees shall be appointed by the presiding officer of this house.” At the time, this seemed to be a logical extension of the president pro tempore’s duties. Since the vice presidency had been vacant several times in recent years, or held by someone who took little interest in the business of the Senate, a more visible role for the president pro tempore had emerged. Only once between 1823 and 1825, however, did the new rule come into play for the president pro tempore, when John Gaillard made committee assignments in the absence of Vice President Daniel Tompkins.

When Vice President John C. Calhoun took office in December of 1825, he assumed a more active, partisan role in Senate proceedings, including exercising the right, as presiding officer, to appoint committee members. Senators objected to the partisanship of his committee appointments. They also balked at the idea of the vice president—not an elected member of the Senate—assuming a power they had expected to be exercised by the president pro tempore. (Since Calhoun presided regularly, the Senate had not elected a president pro tempore.) Senators sought to regain power over committees and on April 15, 1826, reestablished the old system of the full Senate electing committee members.



*President pro tempore Hugh Lawson White was deprived of the power to make committees assignments when the Senate changed its rules in 1833.*

In 1828, with Calhoun still in office, the Senate gave this power only to the president pro tempore, specifically denying it to the vice president. In 1833, as in 1825, the removal of that power from the president pro tempore was a political decision. With Andrew Jackson in the White House and newly elected Vice President Martin Van Buren scheduled to preside over the Senate, the anti-Jackson faction within the Senate successfully maneuvered to have committee assignments again made by Senate election, depriving President pro tempore Hugh Lawson White,

who was perceived to be a Jackson man, of that privilege. The power of the president pro tempore to influence committee assignments was reinstated again in 1837, but came to an end in 1845. When the 29th

Congress convened in December 1845, senators refused to allow Vice President George M. Dallas to appoint committee members on his own initiative. Instead, they gave the choice of committee assignments to the Senate's two party caucuses. After that time, vice presidents and presidents pro tempore formally made appointments, but only with the consent of the party caucus.

By the eve of the Civil War, the office of the president pro tempore had evolved into a position of institutional prestige, with additional compensation for service to the Senate, but with only limited power over the Senate's legislative business. As a neutral presiding officer, the president pro tempore became a significant fixture in daily management of Senate business, maintaining order and decorum in the Senate Chamber, particularly during long vice presidential absences and vacancies. The Senate's president pro tempore also provided continuity to the national government, standing ready to advance to the presidency should the need arise.



# 1. John Langdon (*New Hampshire*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1789, 1792, 1793

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1789, to March 3, 1801

*Party:* Pro-Administration; Anti-Administration; Democratic Republican

*Born:* Portsmouth, New Hampshire, June 26, 1741

*Died:* Portsmouth, New Hampshire, September 18, 1819

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**Education:** Attended Portsmouth, New Hampshire, grammar school; apprenticed as a clerk.

**Non-Senate Career:** John Langdon worked as a merchant and ship-builder and became a member of the New Hampshire general court in 1775. That same year, he was made a delegate to the Continental Congress, and served again in 1776 when he was appointed Continental prize agent for New Hampshire. In 1776 he became speaker of the state house of representatives, and then state senator in 1784. He was elected president of New Hampshire in 1785 and again in 1788 and served as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1787. After serving in the United States Senate, he again served in the New Hampshire legislature, from 1801 to 1805, and then became governor of New Hampshire, serving from 1805 to 1808, and again from 1810 to 1811, with the exception of 1809. Langdon declined the nomination as a candidate for vice president of the United States in 1812.

**Observations:** “[Langdon] apparently received this recognition not because he was looked to for leadership but because of his contributions to the revolutionary cause and his gracious and sociable manner. He appeared to good advantage in the Presiding Officer’s chair, where he was described as ‘attentive, prompt and impartial.’”

~ U.S. Congress, Senate, *The United States Senate, 1787–1801: A Dissertation on the First Fourteen Years of the Upper Legislative Body*, by Roy Swanstrom, S. Doc. 100–31, 100th Cong., 1st sess., 1988, 258.

“He was a true patriot and a good man, with a noble way of thinking and a frankness and warmth of heart that made his friends love him much, as it did me in a high degree, and disarmed his enemies of some of the asperities indulged toward others.”

~ James Madison on John Langdon, quoted in Charles R. Corning, *John Langdon* (Concord: Rumford Printing Company, 1903), 30.



## 2. Richard Henry Lee (*Virginia*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1792

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1789, to October 8, 1792

*Party:* Anti-Administration

*Born:* “Stratford,” Westmoreland County, Virginia, January 20, 1732

*Died:* “Chantilly,” Westmoreland County, Virginia, June 19, 1794

**Education:** Received private instruction; attended Wakefield Academy (in England).

**Non-Senate Career:** Richard Henry Lee became a justice of the peace for Westmoreland County in 1757. He played a key role in events that led to the American Revolution, serving in Virginia’s house of burgesses from 1758 to 1775, and as a member of the Continental Congress from 1774 to 1779. Lee sponsored the resolution calling for American independence, was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and drafted the first national Thanksgiving Day proclamation issued by Congress at York, Pennsylvania, on October 31, 1777. He was a member of Virginia’s house of delegates from 1780 to 1784, serving as speaker in 1781, and again of the Continental Congress from 1784 to 1785 and in 1787, serving as president of the Congress in 1784. Although chosen as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1787, and also to the state ratifying convention in 1788, he declined to serve because of poor health. He retired from public life after serving as one of Virginia’s first two U.S. senators.

**Observations:** “Lee exerted a powerful influence over the work and deliberations of the Senate. He was a good speaker, sometimes referring to prepared notes, according to Maclay. . . . His reputation as an experienced legislator preceded him, and despite his antifederalism he was immediately appointed to committees on rules, certification of the presidential election, and the inaugural ceremonies. By the end of the First Congress, Lee had been assigned to no fewer than thirty-two committees.”

~ Kenneth R. Bowling, Charlene Bangs Bickford, William Charles DiGiacomantonio, and Helen E. Veit, eds., *Documentary History of the First Federal Congress of the United States of America, March 4, 1789–March 3, 1791*, vol. 14, *Debates in the House of Representatives, Third Session, December 1790–March 1791: Biographies of Members* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 873.

**Further Reading:** Lee, Richard Henry. *The Letters of Richard Henry Lee*. Edited by James Ballagh. 1911–1914. Reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1970; Chitwood, Oliver. *Richard Henry Lee, Statesman of the Revolution*. Morgantown: University Library, 1967.





### 3. Ralph Izard (*South Carolina*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1794

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1789, to March 3, 1795

*Party:* Pro-Administration

*Born:* “The Elms,” near Charleston, South Carolina, January 23, 1741 or 1742

*Died:* Near Charleston, South Carolina, May 30, 1804

**Education:** Pursued classical studies in Hackney, England.

**Non-Senate Career:** After his schooling in England, Ralph Izard returned to South Carolina in 1764 to manage his plantations. He moved to London in 1771 and then to Paris after October 1776, intending to return to America. He was elected by Congress in 1777 to serve as commissioner to the Court of Tuscany, and although he was never received by that government, he remained in France until 1780. From 1782 to 1783, he served as a delegate from South Carolina to the Continental Congress. After the war, he served in the state legislature before becoming one of South Carolina’s first two United States senators. Following his Senate service, he retired from public life to care for his estates.

**Observations:** “But he was not long allowed to remain in retirement; as—on the formation of the Federal Government—he was chosen Senator for six years. He once more embarked on the stormy sea of Politics—where his love of freedom—his liberal mind—strict integrity—and unflinching rectitude, were fully evinced—and though he differed in opinion with many of his contemporaries—he never lost the respect of any.”

~ Written by his daughter, Anne Izard Deas, Ralph Izard, *Correspondence of Mr. Ralph Izard of South Carolina: From the Year 1774 to 1804, with a Short Memoir*, ed. Anne Deas, 1844 Reprint (New York: AMS Press, 1976), xii.

“Notwithstanding a mild speech impediment, Izard also contributed heavily to deliberations on the floor. A significant proportion of his speeches and comments reflect a concern for protecting and enhancing senatorial prerogative. His aristocratic upbringing and experience in the courts of Europe influenced him significantly. He understood better than many the function of ceremony as a vehicle of power and prestige.”

~ Kenneth R. Bowling, Charlene Bangs Bickford, William Charles DiGiacomantonio, and Helen E. Veit, eds., *Documentary History of the First Federal Congress of the United States of America, March 4, 1789–March 3, 1791*, vol. 14, *Debate in the House of Representatives, Third Session, December 1790–March 1791: Biographies of Members* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 831–2.

**Further Reading:** Izard, Ralph. *Correspondence of Mr. Ralph Izard of South Carolina, From the Year 1774 to 1804, with a Short Memoir*. Edited by Anne Deas. 1844. Reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1976.



## 4. Henry Tazewell (*Virginia*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1795

*Senate Service:* December 29, 1794, to January 24, 1799

*Party:* Anti-Administration; Democratic Republican

*Born:* Brunswick County, Virginia, November 27, 1753

*Died:* Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, January 24, 1799

**Education:** Graduated from the College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia, in 1770; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** Henry Tazewell was admitted to the bar and began practicing law in Brunswick County in 1773. In 1775, he became a member of Virginia's general assembly, where he represented Brunswick until 1778. During that time, he served as a delegate to the state constitutional convention of 1775 and 1776. In 1778, he moved to Williamsburg and was again elected to the general assembly, where he served until 1785. During the Revolutionary War, he raised and was commissioned captain of a troop of cavalry. He was a judge on the state supreme court from 1785 to 1793, serving as chief justice from 1789 to 1793, and was then appointed to the high court of appeals in 1793. He served in the U.S. Senate until his death. Henry Tazewell's son, Littleton Waller Tazewell, also served in the U.S. Senate and was elected president pro tempore in 1832.

**Observations:** "Henry Tazewell . . . was elected president pro tempore in February 1795. The remarkable fact here is that the forty-one-year-old Tazewell had only entered the Senate two months earlier, in December 1794! Moreover, he was a Jeffersonian Republican at a time when the Senate was controlled by the Federalist party. Could anyone imagine the election today of a young freshman member of the minority party as president pro tempore? It would be inconceivable!"

~ U.S. Congress, Senate, *The Senate, 1789–1989, Addresses on the History of the United States Senate*, by Robert C. Byrd, vol. 2, S. Doc. 100–20, 100th Cong., 1st sess., 1991, 170.

Henry Tazewell was "among the most distinguished of our early statesmen, who from his youth, in the sunshine of peace and amid the storms of revolution, had developed all his faculties to the service of his country; and if the light of his glory in the long lapse of years has seemed to grow dim, it is a subject of gratulation [satisfaction] that it has been lost, as his fondest wishes would have led him to lose it, in the blaze which the genius of his only son has kindled about his name."

~ C. W. Tazewell, ed., *Henry Tazewell: Most Popular Virginian of His Day* (Virginia Beach: W. S. Dawson Co., 1992), 7.



## 5. Samuel Livermore (*New Hampshire*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1796, 1799

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1793, to June 12, 1801

*Party:* Pro-Administration; Federalist

*Born:* Waltham, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, May 14, 1732

*Died:* Holderness, Grafton County, New Hampshire, May 18, 1803

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**Education:** Attended Waltham, Massachusetts, schools; graduated from the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University) in 1752; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** Upon his admission to the bar in 1756, Samuel Livermore began practicing law in Waltham, Massachusetts. He moved to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in 1758 and was elected to the New Hampshire general assembly in 1768. He served in the general assembly until 1769, when he was appointed a judge-advocate in the admiralty court, and then attorney general. He moved to Holderness, New Hampshire, in 1775 where he worked as a state attorney for three years. He was a member of the Continental Congress from 1780 to 1782 and again from 1785 to 1786. In 1782, he became chief justice of the New Hampshire state supreme court, a position he held until 1789. He served as a member of the state constitutional convention in 1788 and was president of the convention in 1791. He was elected in 1789 to the U.S. House of Representatives where he served as chairman of the Committee on Elections from 1791 to 1793.

**Observations:** Samuel Livermore “rose, and continued in office, by the force of talents, and the reputation of integrity, and not by the mildness of his temper, or the amenity of his manners. He was a man of strong intellectual powers, of great shrewdness—possessed much wit, and had a vein for severe satire.”

~ William Plumer on Samuel Livermore, from James McLachlan, *Princetonians: A Biographical Directory, 1748–1768* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976–1991), 1: 52.

**Further Reading:** Corning, Charles R. *Samuel Livermore: Address Before the Grafton and Coös Bar Association*. Concord, NH: Republican Press Association, 1888.



## 6. William Bingham (*Pennsylvania*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1797

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1795, to March 3, 1801

*Party:* Federalist

*Born:* Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, March 8, 1752

*Died:* Bath, England, February 7, 1804

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*Education:* Graduated from Philadelphia College in 1768.

*Non-Senate Career:* In 1776, William Bingham was appointed by the Continental Congress as a commercial agent to Martinique, and afterwards as consul at St. Pierre, in the West Indies, from 1777 to 1780. After returning to America, he served in the Continental Congress from 1786 to 1788. He was a member of Pennsylvania's house of representatives from 1790 to 1791, serving as speaker in 1791, and then became president of the state senate, serving from 1794 to 1795. Following his U.S. Senate service, he withdrew from public life and engaged in the management of his extensive estates. He moved in 1801 to Bath, England, and resided with his daughter until his death.

*Observations:* "He was pleasant in his manners, amiable in his temper, liberal but said not [to] be charitable."

~ Benjamin Rush, upon hearing of death of Bingham, 1804. Quoted in Robert C. Alberts, *The Golden Voyage* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1969), 429.

"Mr. Bingham is so well versed in the Politics of this place, and South of it, and so well acquainted with the movements in both houses of Congress, that it would be a Work of Supererogation in me, to give you the details."

~ *President George Washington*, June 9, 1796. Quoted in Robert C. Alberts, *The Golden Voyage* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1969), 285.



## 7. William Bradford (*Rhode Island*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1797

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1793, to October 1797

*Party:* Pro-Administration; Federalist

*Born:* Plympton, Plymouth County, Massachusetts, November 4, 1729

*Died:* Bristol, Rhode Island, July 6, 1808

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**Education:** Studied medicine in Hingham, Massachusetts; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** William Bradford was admitted to the Rhode Island bar in 1767 after abandoning the practice of medicine for the law. He practiced law in Bristol, Rhode Island. Bradford was a member of the Rhode Island house of representatives for several terms between 1761 and 1803, serving as speaker on several occasions. He served on the Rhode Island Committee of Correspondence in 1773 and was deputy governor of Rhode Island from 1775 until 1778. In 1776, he was elected as a delegate to the Continental Congress, but did not attend. Following his U.S. Senate service, he retired to his home in Bristol, Rhode Island.

**Observations:** Bradford “received a liberal education, and later studied medicine at Hingham, Mass., under Dr. E. Hersey. He practised medicine for a time at Warren, R.I., later removing to Bristol, R.I., where he studied law, was admitted to the bar, and soon became one of the most eminent practitioners of the province. He took an active part in Revolutionary affairs.”

~ *National Cyclopedia of American Biography.*



## 8. Jacob Read (*South Carolina*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1797

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1795, to March 3, 1801

*Party:* Federalist

*Born:* “Hobcaw” plantation in Christ Church Parish, near Charleston, South Carolina, 1752

*Died:* Charleston, South Carolina, July 17, 1816

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**Education:** Completed preparatory studies; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** Jacob Read was admitted to the South Carolina bar in 1773. He studied in England from 1773 to 1776, joining other Americans in London in 1774 in a petition against the Boston port bill. He returned to America in 1776 and served South Carolina in various military and civil capacities during the Revolutionary War. He spent 1780 and 1781 as a prisoner of the British in St. Augustine. After his release, he served in South Carolina’s state assembly in 1782, and on the privy council in 1783. He was elected to the Continental Congress in 1783 and served until 1785. After serving in the South Carolina house of representatives as speaker from 1787 to 1794, he was elected to the U.S. Senate. He ran unsuccessfully for a second Senate term and retired from public life.

**Observations:** “As a member of the South Carolina [Ratification] Convention of 1788, [Read] showed Federalist trends in opposing the motions that consideration of the federal constitution be postponed and that re-eligibility of the president be deemed dangerous to liberty. Having voted for ratification, he moved the thanks of the convention to the South Carolina framers of the constitution.”

~ *Dictionary of American Biography.*



## 9. Theodore Sedgwick (*Massachusetts*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1798

*Senate Service:* June 11, 1796, to March 3, 1799

*Party:* Federalist

*Born:* West Hartford, Connecticut, May 9, 1746

*Died:* Boston, Massachusetts, January 24, 1813

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**Education:** Attended Yale College; studied theology and law.

**Non-Senate Career:** Theodore Sedgwick was admitted to the bar in 1766 and practiced law in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. During the Revolutionary War, he served in the 1776 expedition against Canada. He was a member of the Massachusetts state house of representatives for several terms between 1780 and 1788, and served as speaker. He was also a member of the state senate from 1784 until 1785. He served as a member of the Continental Congress in 1785 and 1786, and again in 1788. In 1788, he was a delegate to the Massachusetts state convention that adopted the federal Constitution. Sedgwick was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and served from March 4, 1789, until June 1796. Following his U.S. Senate service, he again served in the U.S. House from March 4, 1799, until March 3, 1801. He was the Speaker of the House from 1799 to 1801. In 1802, he became a judge of the supreme court of Massachusetts, where he served until his death.

**Observations:** “Mr. Sedgewick [sic] was by 12 Votes placed in the Chair as President pro tem—From the symptoms he exhibits I fear his head, of which you know he has been long complaining, will derive no advantage from this elevation.”

~ Senator John Brown, June 29, 1798, quoted in “The Letters of Honorable John Brown to the Presidents of the United States,” *Register of Kentucky Historical Society* 35 (January 1937): 17.

**Further Reading:** Welch, Richard. *Theodore Sedgwick, Federalist: A Political Portrait*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1965.



## 10. John Laurance (*New York*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1798

*Senate Service:* November 9, 1796, to August 1800

*Party:* Federalist

*Born:* Falmouth, England, 1750

*Died:* New York City, November 11, 1810

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*Education:* Studied law.

*Non-Senate Career:* John Laurance was admitted to the bar in 1772 and began practicing law in New York City. He served in the Revolution as a commissioned officer and was promoted to judge advocate-general in 1777, serving until 1782. He became regent of the University of the State of New York in 1784 and served as a trustee of Columbia College from 1784 until 1810. After serving in the state assembly in 1783 and 1785, he became a delegate to the Continental Congress from 1785 to 1787. He was a member of New York's state senate from 1788 until 1789, when he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, serving from April 8, 1789, to March 3, 1793. In May 1794, President George Washington appointed him United States judge of the district of New York, where he served until November 8, 1796, resigning to become a U.S. senator.

*Observations:* “A consistent Federalist in Congress, Laurance supported the Hamiltonian program in its entirety. He was one of the most active and vocal members, and sat on thirty-eight committees, including those that dealt with appropriations, import duties, Indian trade, naturalization, salaries, the seat of government, and Vermont statehood. . . . Despite looking after his constituents's interests, Laurance held to a broad view of legislative responsibility. In a congressional speech he said: ‘Every member on this floor ought to consider himself the representative of the whole Union, and not the particular district which had chosen him.’ . . . Laurance was highly regarded for his legal expertise. Of dignified presence and a powerful debater, he had a key role in achieving success for the Federalist program in Congress during the administrations of George Washington and John Adams.”

~ *American National Biography.*





## 11. James Ross (*Pennsylvania*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1799

*Senate Service:* April 24, 1794, to March 3, 1803

*Party:* Pro-Administration; Federalist

*Born:* Near Delta, Peachbottom Township, York County, Pennsylvania, July 12, 1762

*Died:* Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, November 27, 1847

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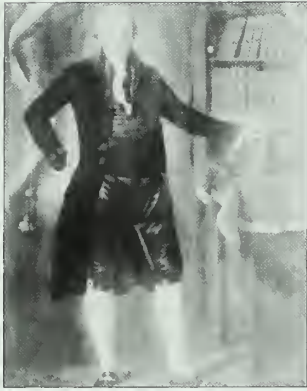
**Education:** Pursued Classical studies near Delta, Peachbottom Township, York County, Pennsylvania; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** When he was just 18, James Ross worked as an instructor of Latin and Greek at what is now Washington and Jefferson College, in Washington, Pennsylvania. He was admitted to the bar in 1784 and practiced law in Washington County and later Allegheny County. During the Whiskey Rebellion of 1794, President Washington appointed Ross to be a federal commissioner to negotiate with the insurgents. He served as a delegate to Pennsylvania's constitutional convention from 1789 to 1790. After his Senate career, he returned to the practice of law and was also heavily engaged in land speculation.

**Observations:** “Emerging [in the 1790s] as a major leader of the Federalist party, Ross was, in many respects, an advocate of Hamiltonian ideologies, for he was an Anglophile and favored fostering mercantile interests and westward expansion. . . . His assertive leadership did not go unnoticed. In 1799 a ship in Pittsburgh was named for him, and he was elected to serve as president pro tempore of the Senate. . . . Ross contributed significantly to the Federalist legacy. He backed the national government during seditious times, was an effective strategist in the Senate, and promoted western business interests. He was important to the development of Pittsburgh and served as the political and legal leader of the city’s prominent Federalist families.”

~ *American National Biography.*

**Further Reading:** Brownson, James I. *The Life and Times of Senator James Ross.* Washington, PA: Observer Job Rooms, 1910.



## 12. Uriah Tracy (*Connecticut*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1800

*Senate Service:* October 13, 1796, to July 19, 1807

*Party:* Federalist

*Born:* Franklin, Connecticut, February 2, 1755

*Died:* Washington, D.C., July 19, 1807

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**Education:** Graduated from Yale College in 1778; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** Uriah Tracy was admitted to the bar in 1781 and practiced law in Litchfield, Connecticut. A member of the state's general assembly from 1788 to 1793, he served as speaker in 1793. He was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in April 1793, and served until his resignation, effective October 13, 1796, when he became a U.S. senator. He also served as state's attorney for Litchfield County during part of his U.S. Senate tenure (1794–1799).

**Observations:** In Congress, Tracy “soon became distinguished, and his great reasoning powers conspicuous on every important question. On referring to his speeches, they will be found remarkable for their solidity and point. . . . As a companion he was instructive and agreeable. His observations in company, on passing events, and the political system of the day, were always profound and generally seasoned with lively anecdote. His thoughts on all occasions seemed to come from him without premeditation, and under a form that alarmed no one's pride or self sufficiency. His humour, too, was easy and natural; like the lightning of a summer's evening, which finishes without thunder, it would shew the object without wounding the person.”

~ *The Connecticut Courant*, August 12, 1807.



## 13. John Eager Howard (*Maryland*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1800

*Senate Service:* November 30, 1796, to March 3, 1803

*Party:* Federalist

*Born:* “Belvedere,” near Baltimore, Maryland, June 4, 1752

*Died:* “Belvedere,” near Baltimore, Maryland, October 12, 1827

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*Education:* Privately tutored.

*Non-Senate Career:* John E. Howard served in the military throughout the Revolutionary War, beginning as a captain and holding the rank of colonel when peace was declared. He received a medal and the thanks of Congress for gallantry at the 1781 Battle of Cowpens. He was a delegate to the Continental Congress in 1788 and served as the governor of Maryland from 1789 to 1791. He was also a member of the state senate from 1791 to 1795. During his U.S. Senate tenure, Howard was offered the position of secretary of war by President George Washington, but he declined. He also declined a commission as brigadier general in the expected war with France in 1798. In 1816, he ran unsuccessfully as a Federalist candidate for vice president of the United States.

*Observations:* “Amidst the frantic agitations of party, which for a series of years convulsed the nation, he almost alone in his generation, won the universal confidence. The most inveterate popular prejudices seemed to yield to the affectionate conviction of his impregnable honesty, his unblenching love of country, and that personal independence which neither party zeal could warp from its course, nor passion subvert, nor faction alarm; and in their bitterest exacerbations, his fellow-citizens of all ranks turned towards him as to a fountain of undefiled patriotism.”

~ *A Memoir of the Late Col. John Eager Howard, reprinted from the Baltimore Gazette of Monday, October 16, 1827* (Kelly, Hedian & Piet, pub., 1863), 7–8.



## 14. James Hillhouse (*Connecticut*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1801

*Senate Service:* December 1796, to June 10, 1810

*Party:* Federalist

*Born:* Montville, Connecticut, October 20, 1754

*Died:* New Haven, Connecticut, December 29, 1832

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**Education:** Attended Hopkins Grammar School, New Haven, Connecticut; graduated from Yale College in 1773; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** James Hillhouse was admitted to the bar in 1775 and practiced law in New Haven, Connecticut. He served in the Revolutionary War and in 1779 was captain of the governor's foot guards when the British invaded New Haven. He was a member of the state house of representatives from 1780 to 1785. In 1786 and again in 1788, he was chosen as a delegate to the Continental Congress, but he did not attend. He served in Connecticut's upper house, the state council, from 1789 until 1790, when he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. He served in the House from March 4, 1791, until his resignation in the fall of 1796 to become a U.S. senator. Following his Senate service, he was a member of the Hartford Convention in 1814 and treasurer of Yale College from 1782 until his death.

**Observations:** “He was not a visionary statesman, like those who in their closets frame ingenious schemes of government for utopian commonwealths. Nor was he one of those who have a passion for pulling down the fabric of existing institutions for the sake of some new-fangled reconstruction. His genius was conservative rather than revolutionary, and practical rather than speculative. . . . He had that sort of natural leadership among his equals; that special faculty of influence over men, that power of winning their full confidence and of making them willing to follow where he led, which is given only in nature's patent of nobility. . . . What was admired and honored in James Hillhouse was, not the man's extraordinary ability—not his eloquence or his wit—not the depth and reach of his learning, or the acuteness and power of his logic,—but the man himself.”

~ Leonard Bacon, *Sketch of the Life and Public Services of Hon. James Hillhouse of New Haven* (New Haven: n.p., 1860), 25, 42–43.



## 15. Abraham Baldwin (*Georgia*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1801, 1802

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1799, to March 4, 1807

*Party:* Democratic Republican

*Born:* North Guilford, Connecticut, November 22, 1754

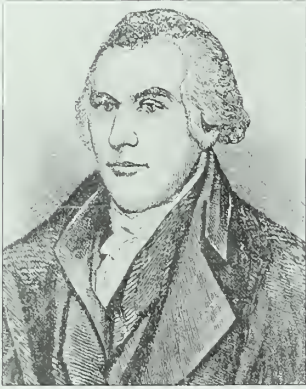
*Died:* Washington, D.C., March 4, 1807

**Education:** Attended private schools; graduated from Yale College in 1772; studied theology at Yale College and was licensed to preach in 1775; studied law during his service in the army.

**Non-Senate Career:** Abraham Baldwin worked as a tutor at Yale College from 1775 until 1779. He then became an army chaplain in the Second Connecticut Brigade of the Revolutionary Army. In 1783, he was admitted to the bar and practiced law in Fairfield County, Connecticut. He soon moved to Georgia and continued to practice law in that state. In 1785, he became a member of the Georgia state house of representatives. He was the originator of the plan for, and author of, the charter of the University of Georgia and served as president of the university from 1786 until 1801. He subsequently served as chairman of the university's board of trustees until his death in 1807. He served as a member of the Continental Congress in 1785, 1787, and 1788. He was also a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1787. He was elected to represent Georgia as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives in the First Congress and served in that body from March 4, 1789, until March 4, 1799, when he became a U.S. senator.

**Observations:** “In 1801 when Vice President Aaron Burr was absent, the Senate elected Baldwin as its presiding officer (President pro tempore) despite the fact that he had been a Senator for only two years. The reputation for ability and fairness in parliamentary proceedings that Baldwin had gained in the House of Representatives followed him into the Senate. He had become the ‘Old Congress-Man.’”

~ Albert B. Saye, quoted in E. Merton Coulter, *Abraham Baldwin: Patriot, Educator, and Founding Father* (Arlington, VA: Vandamere Press, 1987), viii.



## 16. Stephen Row Bradley (*Vermont*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1802–1803, 1808–1809

*Senate Service:* October 17, 1791, to March 3, 1795; October 15, 1801, to March 3, 1813

*Party:* Anti-Administration; Democratic Republican

*Born:* Wallingford, Connecticut, February 20, 1754

*Died:* Walpole, New Hampshire, December 9, 1830

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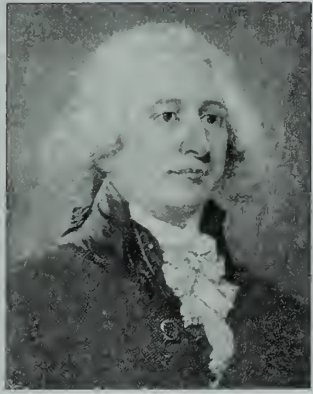
**Education:** Graduated from Yale College in 1775; received a MA degree from Yale in 1778; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** After graduating from Yale in 1775, Stephen Row Bradley became captain of a volunteer company during the Revolutionary War and served intermittently from 1775 to 1779. He was admitted to the Vermont bar in 1779 and practiced law in Westminister, Vermont. In 1780 he became state's attorney for Cumberland County, and then served as register of probate for Westminister from 1781 to 1791. He was appointed judge of Windham County in 1783 and represented Westminister in the general assembly in 1780, 1781, 1784, 1785, 1788, and 1790, serving as speaker in 1785. He was appointed associate judge of the superior court of Vermont in 1788. Upon the admission of Vermont as a state into the Union, he was elected to the United States Senate. He was an unsuccessful candidate for reelection in 1795, and became a member of the city council of Westminister in 1798. Following his second tenure in the U.S. Senate, he retired from public life and returned to Westminister. In 1818 he moved to Walpole, New Hampshire.

**Observations:** “Few men have more companionable talents, a greater share of social cheerfulness, a more inexhaustible flow of wit, or a larger portion of unaffected urbanity.”

~ John A. Graham, quoted in Walter H. Crockett, ed., *Vermonters: A Book of Biographies* (Brattleboro: Stephen Daye Press, 1931), 32.

**Further Reading:** Bradley, Stephen Row. *Vermont's Appeal to the Candid and Impartial World*. Hartford: Hudson Goodwin, 1780.



## 17. John Brown (*Kentucky*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1803, 1804

*Senate Service:* June 18, 1792, to March 3, 1805

*Party:* Anti-Administration; Democratic Republican

*Born:* Staunton, Virginia, September 12, 1757

*Died:* Frankfort, Kentucky, August 29, 1837

**Education:** Attended Washington College (now Washington and Lee University), Lexington, Virginia, and Princeton College; completed his studies at William and Mary College, Williamsburg, Virginia; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** In 1776, John Brown enlisted as a private in the Revolutionary Army. He was admitted to the bar in 1782 and practiced law in Frankfort, Kentucky. From 1784 until 1788, he served as a member of the Virginia senate from the district of Kentucky. Brown was a delegate from that district to the Continental Congress in 1787 and 1788. He was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Virginia and served from March 4, 1789, until June 1, 1792, when that portion of Virginia, which is now Kentucky, was admitted as a state. Following his U.S. Senate service, he resumed the practice of law in Frankfort, Kentucky.

**Observations:** “In 1784 [John Brown] was elected to represent Kentucky in the Virginia Assembly and in 1787 was selected by it as one of its representatives to the Continental Congress. In this congress he labored diligently for separation from Virginia, for statehood in the Union, for effective protection against the Indians, and for some arrangement with Spain for the free navigation of the Mississippi. He was a member of the Virginia Convention to consider the ratification of the Federal Constitution, and in 1789 he was elected to represent the District of Kentucky in Congress. Re-elected in 1791, he resigned in 1792 to become one of the first two senators from the newly-admitted State. Again elected to the United States Senate in 1799, he retired in 1805 to private life. When he died in 1837 he was the sole surviving member of the Continental Congress.”

~ Huntley Dupre, “Three Letters of George Nicholas to John Brown,” *The Register of the Kentucky State Historical Society* 41 (January 1943): 2.

**Further Reading:** Sprague, Stuart S. “Senator John Brown of Kentucky, 1757–1837: A Political Biography.” Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1972; Warren, Elizabeth. “John Brown and His Influence on Kentucky Politics: 1784–1805.” Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1937.

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## 18. Jesse Franklin (*North Carolina*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1804

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1799, to March 3, 1805; March 4, 1807, to March 3, 1813

*Party:* Democratic Republican

*Born:* Orange County, Virginia, March 24, 1760

*Died:* Surry County, North Carolina, August 31, 1823

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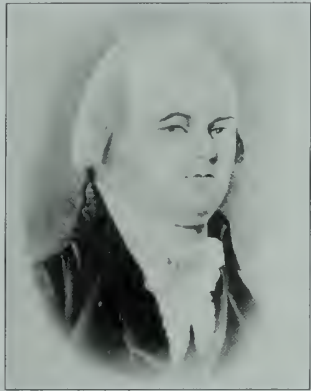
*Education:* Left school before he reached the age of 12, but read extensively.

*Non-Senate Career:* Jesse Franklin, a major during the Revolutionary War, served in North Carolina's house of commons from 1793 to 1794, in the U.S. House of Representatives from March 4, 1795, to March 3, 1797, and again in the state house from 1797 to 1798. After one term in the United States Senate, he served in the state senate from 1805 to 1806. After a second Senate term, he was appointed a commissioner to treat with the Chickasaw Indians in 1817 and was governor of North Carolina from 1820 to 1821.

*Observations:* Franklin "in 1798 was elected to the United States Senate, serving from 1799 to 1805. During the impeachment trial of Judge [John] Pickering, he was chosen president *pro tempore*. . . . Franklin voted for the conviction of Pickering and also for the conviction of Justice Samuel Chase. . . . He spoke seldom in the Senate, but was active and valuable in committee work, and won nationally the reputation he had at home for hard practical sense, straightforward simplicity, and fine integrity."

~ *Dictionary of American Biography.*





## 19. Joseph Inslee Anderson (*Tennessee*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1805

*Senate Service:* September 26, 1797, to March 3, 1815

*Party:* Democratic Republican

*Born:* Near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 5, 1757

*Died:* Washington, D.C., April 17, 1837

***Education:*** Studied law.

***Non-Senate Career:*** Joseph Anderson served in the military throughout the Revolutionary War, spending much of this time as a regimental paymaster, and attained the rank of brevet major in the Continental Army. After leaving the military service, he was admitted to the bar and practiced law in Delaware for several years. In 1791, he was appointed a United States judge for the territory south of the Ohio River. He also served as a member of the first constitutional convention of Tennessee in 1796. After serving a long tenure in the U.S. Senate, President James Madison appointed him to be the first comptroller of the U.S. Treasury, where he served until 1836. He lived in retirement until his death.

***Observations:*** Anderson “served some 15 years, and was about the most active Senator during all that time. He seems to have been a member of all the important committees, and his reports very generally were accepted. Apparently, he kept up with the business of the Senate more accurately than did any other Senator. During the time he was there he was as active as James Madison was in the Constitutional Convention. . . . I regard Senator Anderson as one of the ablest and most efficient senators Tennessee ever produced. His industry was proverbial. His good sense was a tower of strength to him.”

~ Kenneth McKellar, *Tennessee Senators* (Kingsport, TN: Southern Publishers, Inc., 1942), 118–120.

***Further Reading:*** McMillan, Fay E. “A Biographical Sketch of Joseph Anderson (1759–1837).” *East Tennessee Historical Society’s Publications* 2 (1930): 81–93.



## 20. Samuel Smith (*Maryland*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1805–1807, 1808, 1828, 1829–1831

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1803, to March 3, 1815; December 17, 1822, to March 3, 1833

*Party:* Democratic Republican; Crawford Republican/Jacksonian

*Born:* Carlisle, Pennsylvania, July 27, 1752

*Died:* Baltimore, Maryland, April 22, 1839

**Education:** Attended a private academy.

**Non-Senate Career:** Samuel Smith of Maryland served in the Revolutionary War as captain, major, and lieutenant colonel and engaged in the shipping business after the war ended. He was elected to the Maryland house of delegates in 1791, and to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1792, serving from March 4, 1793, to March 3, 1803. At the time of the threatened war with France in 1794, he was appointed brigadier general of militia and commanded Maryland's quota during the Whiskey Rebellion. After serving two terms in the United States Senate, during which he became major general of militia in the defense of Baltimore during the War of 1812, he again served in the U.S. House from January 31, 1816, to December 17, 1822. He served as chairman of the House Committee on Expenditures in the Department of the Treasury (1816–1817), and the House Ways and Means Committee (1817–1822). He resigned his House seat, having been again elected to the U.S. Senate. He was elected mayor of Baltimore, Maryland, following his second U.S. Senate tenure, and served from 1835 to 1838, following which he retired from public life.

**Committee Chair:** Finance (1823–1833)

**Observations:** “The convening of the first session of the Ninth Congress in December 1805 was of more than usual interest to Smith. Not only was he concerned about growing French and British interference with American commerce, but also he was worried about his relations with the [Jefferson] administration, which had become strained during the

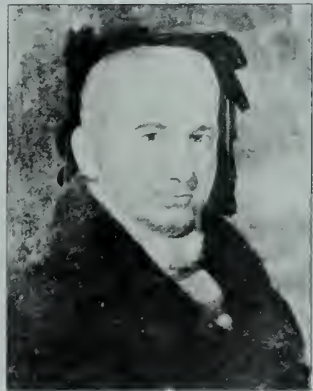
past year. With some relief he discovered that his position in the Republican party was still secure. Indeed, the Republican majority in the Senate felt no qualms in choosing Smith president pro tem, an honor that surprised and embarrassed him.”

~ Frank Cassell, *Merchant Congressman in the young Republic: Samuel Smith of Maryland, 1752–1839* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1971), 123.

“It was when General Smith had reached the venerable age of 84 years that a violent riot occurred in Baltimore which threatened to become completely beyond the control of civil authority. The mob became more menacing every minute. Suddenly to the astonishment of all there appeared on the streets the figure of an old man carrying an American flag. It soon became whispered among the rioters that it was ‘old Gen. Samuel Smith.’ As he approached the lines of the rioters themselves, followed by a limited number of peaceful citizens, the effect was miraculous. The revered personality, carrying in his hand the flag he had served so well, was too much even for a band of indignant rioters. Instead of violence, tranquility was established. Not a thing was done which the rioters felt would shock their beloved old general. Under the spell of this personal veneration the riot was quelled and the city's troubles were averted.”

~ *The Baltimore Sun*, December 17, 1915.

**Further Reading:** Pancake, John. *Samuel Smith and the Politics of Business, 1782–1839*. University: University of Alabama Press, 1972.



## 21. John Milledge (*Georgia*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1809

*Senate Service:* June 19, 1806, to November 14, 1809

*Party:* Democratic Republican

*Born:* Savannah, Georgia, in 1757

*Died:* Near Augusta, Georgia, February 9, 1818

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**Education:** Attended Bethesda School in Georgia and was privately tutored; studied law in the office of the King's Attorney.

**Non-Senate Career:** John Milledge was admitted to the bar and practiced law in Savannah, Georgia. During the Revolutionary War, he was one of the patriots who rifled the powder magazine in Savannah in 1775 and later narrowly missed being hanged as a spy. In 1780, he became attorney general of Georgia. He was also a member of the state general assembly for several sessions. Milledge was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and served several terms between 1792 and 1802. In the House, he was the chairman of the Committee on Elections from 1801 until 1802. He became the governor of Georgia in 1802 and served until 1806, when he was elected the U.S. Senate. Milledge was also one of the founders of the University of Georgia at Athens.

**Observations:** In “1806 he was sent to the United States Senate to fill the vacancy caused by the death of James Jackson. Reelected for a full term in 1807, he resigned while president *pro tempore* in 1809 and retired, respected and admired by all, to a life of elegant leisure.”  
~ *Dictionary of American Biography.*

“In 1806 . . . Milledge was given the highest office that Georgia can bestow upon one of her sons. For three years he served as United States Senator, part of the time as President *Pro Tem.* of the Senate, resigning in 1809 and retiring from public life to his home. . . .”

~ Victor Davidson, included in Harriet Milledge Salley, ed., *Correspondence of John Milledge, Governor of Georgia, 1802–1806* (Columbia, SC: State Commercial Printing Company, 1949), 16.

**Further Reading:** Mellichamp, Josephine. *Senators From Georgia.* Huntsville, AL: Strode Publishers, 1976.



## 22. Andrew Gregg (*Pennsylvania*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1809

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1807, to March 4, 1813

*Party:* Democratic Republican

*Born:* Carlisle, Pennsylvania, June 10, 1755

*Died:* Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, May 20, 1835

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**Education:** Attended Reverend John Steel's Latin School in Carlisle and the Academy in Newark, Delaware.

**Non-Senate Career:** Andrew Gregg served in the Delaware militia during the American Revolution. From 1779 to 1783 he worked as a tutor at the University of Pennsylvania at Philadelphia. He moved to Middletown, Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, in 1783 and became a merchant, and then moved to Penn's Valley (now in Bucks County), Pennsylvania, in 1789 to engage in agricultural pursuits. He was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and served from March 4, 1791, to March 3, 1807. After one term as a U.S. senator, he moved to Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, in 1814 and engaged in banking. He served as secretary of state of Pennsylvania from 1820 to 1823 and ran unsuccessfully for governor in 1823.

**Observations:** "Gregg was well liked and respected by his contemporaries, one of whom called him 'a highly respectable inhabitant of this country, and for many years known as a public man in Pennsylvania and in the United States.' Another praised him for his 'sound and discriminating mind, agreeable and dignified manners, strict regard for truth, and unbending and unyielding honesty.' Gregg was a well-educated, accomplished leader who succeeded in a variety of careers and was a participant in some of the most significant political events of his time."

~ *American National Biography.*



## 23. John Gaillard (*South Carolina*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1810, 1814, 1815–1819, 1820–1825

*Senate Service:* December 6, 1804, to February 26, 1826

*Party:* Democratic Republican; Crawford Republican; Jacksonian

*Born:* St. Stephens District, South Carolina, September 5, 1765

*Died:* Washington, D.C., February 26, 1826

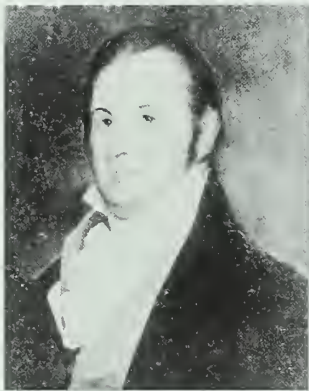
**Education:** Studied law in England.

**Non-Senate Career:** John Gaillard, a planter, served as a member of the South Carolina state house of representatives from 1794 until 1796. He was a member of the state senate from 1796 to 1804 and served as president of that body from 1803 until 1804, when he became a member of the United States Senate.

**Observations:** “It becomes, Mr. President, my melancholy duty to announce to this House, that my respected colleague, the Father of the Senate, is no more. After a faithful and uninterrupted service in this body, of more than twenty-one years, he has fallen, in the fulness of his honors, and in the midst of his usefulness. . . . Mr. Gaillard took his seat in the Senate on the 31st of January, 1805. . . . In 1810, (when he had been but five years a member,) Mr. Gaillard was elected President pro tempore of the Senate, to which office he was *nine times* most honorably chosen, having, for a period of *fourteen years*, presided over the deliberations of this Assembly. . . . In fulfilling his duties as a Senator, the solidity of his judgment and his dignified and unostentatious deportment, elicited the esteem and commanded the respect of his associates. But it was in the performance of the high duties of the presiding officer of the Senate, (which he discharged for a longer period than has fallen to the lot of any other man) that the conspicuous traits of his character were mostly fully developed. The ease and fidelity with which he fulfilled these duties,—always arduous, and often of the most difficult and delicate nature—his perfect command of temper—exemplary patience—

strict impartiality, and clear discernment—have never been surpassed, and seldom equalled. . . . So thorough was his acquaintance with Parliamentary forms, and especially with the practice of this House, and such was the confidence reposed in his justice, that his opinion on all questions of order was considered as a binding authority. Though Mr. Gaillard was not in the habit of engaging in debate, yet, when it became necessary for him to explain the grounds of his decision, or to shed the lights of his experience on questions before the Senate, no man could express himself with more simplicity, perspicuity, or force. I know not how better to sum up the merits of the deceased, than in the words of [Nathaniel Macon who] lately declared ‘that Mr. Gaillard was designed by nature to preside over such an assembly *as this*.’”

~ Senator Robert Y. Hayne of South Carolina, U.S. Congress, Senate, *Register of Debates*, 19th Cong., 1st sess., February 27, 1826, 110–111.



## 24. John Pope (*Kentucky*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1811

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1807, to March 4, 1813

*Party:* Democratic Republican

*Born:* Prince William County, Virginia, 1770

*Died:* Washington County, Kentucky, July 12, 1845

**Education:** Completed preparatory studies; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** John Pope was admitted to the bar and practiced law in Washington, Shelby, and Fayette Counties in Kentucky. He was elected to Kentucky's house of representatives and served in 1802 and again from 1806 to 1807. After one term as a United States senator, he served in the state senate from 1825 to 1829 and became territorial governor of Arkansas from 1829 to 1835. He resumed the practice of law in Springfield, Kentucky, and concluded his public service career as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, serving from March 4, 1837, to March 3, 1843.

**Observations:** "In the United States Senate, Mr. Pope's talents were displayed with exemplary zeal and brilliancy. During the earlier years of his six-year term he was recognized as one of the leaders of the Republican party in the Senate. In 1810 he was signally honored by being chosen president pro tem of that body."

~ Orval W. Baylor, "The Life and Times of John Pope—1770–1845," *The Filson Club History Quarterly* 15 (April 1941): 61–62.

"Following his short career in the Kentucky legislature, that body elected him to the United States Senate in 1806. A few months after he took office in Washington, he wrote to a friend: 'I have embarked in political life and mean to make a business of it. I occupy much higher ground here both on the scale of talents and republicanism than either you or myself expected; except Breckinridge no man from the West ever had more popularity in Congress.' Whether due to his popularity or his ability as a legislator, Pope's colleagues elevated him to the position of president pro tempore in 1811, an honor rare for first-term senators."

~ George T. Blakey, "Rendezvous with Republicanism: John Pope vs. Henry Clay in 1816," *Indiana History* 62 (September 1966): 234–35.

**Further Reading:** Baylor, Orval. *John Pope, Kentuckian: His Life and Times, 1770–1845*. Cynthiana, KY: The Hobson Press, 1943



## 25. William Harris Crawford (*Georgia*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1812–1813

*Senate Service:* November 7, 1807, to March 23, 1813

*Party:* Democratic Republican

*Born:* Nelson County, Virginia, February 24, 1772

*Died:* Oglethorpe County, Georgia, September 15, 1834

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**Education:** Received Classical education in a private school and in Richmond Academy, Augusta, Georgia; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** As a young man, William Harris Crawford taught English at the Richmond Academy in Augusta, Georgia. He was admitted to the bar in 1799 and began practicing law in Lexington, Georgia. Later that same year, he was appointed to prepare a digest of the laws of Georgia. He became a member of the state house of representatives and served from 1803 to 1807. Following his service in the United States Senate, he was appointed minister to France and served from 1813 until 1815. He was appointed secretary of war in 1815 and a year later moved to the Treasury Department as secretary of the treasury, where he served until 1825. Upon returning to Georgia in 1827, he was appointed judge of the northern circuit court, a position he held until his death.

**Observations:** “On March 23 [1812] the Senate adjourned because of the indisposition of the Vice President; the following day Crawford was elected president pro tempore on the first ballot. It is highly probable that Crawford’s subordination of partisan politics to issues and the impartiality of his criticism were significant factors in his being chosen. . . . Clinton had died within a month of his indisposition, and Crawford was elected president pro tempore at the next session. He seems not to have used his position to make partisan appointments or confer personal favors. . . .”

~ Chase C. Mooney, *William H. Crawford, 1772–1834* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1974), 28–29.

**Further Reading:** Green, Philip. *The Life of William Crawford*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1965.



## 26. Joseph Bradley Varnum (*Massachusetts*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1813–1814

*Senate Service:* June 29, 1811, to March 3, 1817

*Party:* Democratic Republican

*Born:* Dracut, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, January 29, 1750 or 1751

*Died:* Dracut, Massachusetts, September 21, 1821

*Education:* Self-taught.

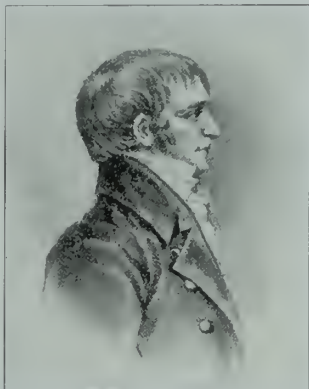
*Non-Senate Career:* Joseph Bradley Varnum was a life-long farmer and served in the Revolutionary Army. He represented Dracut in the Massachusetts house of representatives from 1780 to 1785, and northern Middlesex County in the state senate from 1786 to 1795. During that time, he was a delegate to the state convention that ratified the federal Constitution in 1788. He was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1795 and served from March 4, 1795, to June 29, 1811, when he resigned to join the U.S. Senate. He was chairman of the House Committee on Elections from 1797 to 1799 and Speaker of the House from 1807 to 1811. After his U.S. Senate service, he became a delegate to the state constitutional convention in 1820 and a member of the state senate, where he served from 1817 until his death.

*Committee Chair:* Militia (1815–1817)

*Observations:* “Joseph Bradley Varnum was one of the patriots of the Revolution, one of the builders of our present form of government. He served in the army that won our independence; in the legislature of his State, which fed the fires of patriotism and kept alive the spirit of liberty in the hearts of the people; in the National House of Representatives, where he was twice elected Speaker, and in the United States Senate, where he served one term as president pro tem. Then served the people of Massachusetts as Chief Justice of one of its major courts. In every place he served well.”

~ William Henry Smith, *Speakers of the House of Representatives of the United States* (Baltimore, MD: Simon J. Gaeng, 1928), 47.





## 27. James Barbour (*Virginia*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1819

*Senate Service:* January 2, 1815, to March 7, 1825

*Party:* Anti-Democrat/Whig

*Born:* “Frascati,” near Gordonsville, Orange County, Virginia, June 10, 1775

*Died:* Barboursville, Orange County, Virginia, June 7, 1842

***Education:*** Attended the common schools; studied law.

***Non-Senate Career:*** James Barbour was admitted to the bar in 1794 in Orange County, Virginia. He was deputy sheriff of Orange County before serving several terms in the Virginia house of delegates between 1796 and 1812. He was speaker of that body from 1809 to 1812. In 1812, he was elected governor of Virginia, a position he held until 1814. Following his U.S. Senate service, he served as secretary of war under President John Quincy Adams. In 1828, he became United States minister to England and served until 1829. He was chairman of the Whig National Convention in 1839 and also was the founder of the Orange Humane Society, for the education of poor children.

***Committee Chair:*** Foreign Relations (1817–1821, 1823–1825); District of Columbia (1821–1823)

***Observations:*** “Barbour also enjoyed the confidence of his colleagues in the Senate, who in 1819 elected him to the position of president pro tempore. . . . Barbour’s influence in the Senate rested primarily on two qualities: his capacity for hard work in committee, where he demonstrated both an understanding of complex issues and a willingness to engage in the give and take of practical politics, and his effectiveness in debate. . . . He loved the long roll and thunder of rhetoric, fashioned somewhat on the Burkean model. Possessing that dramatic instinct and romantic imagination common to the actor and the orator, he sought splendid imagery and classical allusions. His brother, Philip, observed that he could ‘clothe a beggarly idea in robes of royalty and call down the lightning of heaven to kill a gnat.’ . . . To many who heard him speak, Barbour was ‘a giant in language,’ an orator in the best tradition who, even in his old age, could speak extemporaneously for five hours and could deliver, by the admission of his opponent, ‘the ablest speech ever heard from the lips of any man.’”

~ Charles D. Lowery, *James Barbour, A Jeffersonian Republican* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1984), 104–105.



## 28. Nathaniel Macon (*North Carolina*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1826–1827

*Senate Service:* December 13, 1815, to November 14, 1828

*Party:* Democratic Republican; Crawford Republican; Jacksonian

*Born:* Near Warrenton, Warren County, North Carolina, December 17, 1757

*Died:* ‘Buck Spring,’ near Macon, Warren County, North Carolina, June 29, 1837

**Education:** Pursued classical studies and attended the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University).

**Non-Senate Career:** Nathaniel Macon served in the Revolutionary War and was elected to the North Carolina state senate in 1781, 1782, and 1784. After moving to a plantation on the Roanoke River, he was elected in 1785 to the Continental Congress but declined to serve. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from March 4, 1791, to December 13, 1815, where he served as chairman of the House Committee on Revisal and Unfinished Business from 1797 to 1799, the House Committee on Claims from 1799 to 1801, and the House Committee on Public Expenditures from 1813 to 1815, and as Speaker of the House of Representatives from 1801 to 1807. Following service in the U.S. Senate, he ran for the vice presidency, unsuccessfully, in 1825. In 1835 he was chosen president of the state constitutional convention and became a presidential elector on the Democratic ticket in 1836.

**Committee Chair:** Foreign Relations (1817–1819, 1825–1828); Audit and Control of the Contingent Expenses (1821–1823)

**Observations:** “Yet how many Southerners have ever had a more distinguished career! Not only a Congressman, but Speaker of the House! Not only a Senator, but President of the Senate! Not only the friend and advisor of Jefferson, Jackson, and other Presidents, but a man who twice (or thrice) declined Cabinet positions, and received the electoral vote of so discriminating a state as Virginia for Vice-President! And not only a leader in the convention that remade the Constitution of his state in 1835, but the chief of that convention!”

~ Clarence Poe, “Nathaniel Macon, The Cincinnatus of America,” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 37 (January 1938): 12.

In “what may well be deemed idiosyncratic in these days, he was punctual in the performance of all his minor duties to the Senate, attending its sittings to the moment, attending all the committees to which he was appointed, attending all the funerals of the members and officers of the Houses, always in time at every place where duty required him.”

~ Senator Thomas Hart Benton, *Thirty Years’ View* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1871), 1: 118.

**Further Reading:** Dodd, William E. *The Life of Nathaniel Macon*. Raleigh, N.C.: Edwards and Broughton, 1903; Cunningham, Noble E., Jr. “Nathaniel Macon and the Southern Protest against National Consolidation.” *North Carolina Historical Review* 32 (July 1955): 376–84.



## 29. Littleton Waller Tazewell (*Virginia*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1832

*Senate Service:* December 7, 1824, to July 16, 1832

*Party:* Jackson Republican; Jacksonian

*Born:* Williamsburg, Virginia, December 17, 1774

*Died:* Norfolk, Virginia, May 6, 1860

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**Education:** Privately tutored; graduated from the College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia, in 1791; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** After being admitted to the bar in 1796, Littleton W. Tazewell practiced law in James City County, Virginia. He became a member of the Virginia state house of delegates in 1798 and served until 1800. Following service in the U.S. House of Representatives from November 26, 1800, until March 3, 1801, he moved to Norfolk, Virginia, and served again in the Virginia general assembly from 1804 to 1806, and for a third time from 1816 until 1817. In 1821, he was one of the commissioners of claims under the treaty with Spain ceding Florida. He was a delegate to the state convention in 1829, during his U.S. Senate service, and was governor of Virginia from 1834 until his retirement in 1836. Littleton Tazewell's father, Henry Tazewell, also served in the U.S. Senate and was elected president pro tempore in 1803 and 1804.

**Committee Chair:** Foreign Relations (1827–1832)

**Observations:** Just “one day after Tazewell’s election as president pro tempore, Congress received [President Andrew Jackson’s] message vetoing the act to recharter the Bank of the United States. . . . The veto message touched off an outpouring of violent opinions greater than any since Webster and Hayne had engaged in verbal combat, and Tazewell, in the chair, presided over a wild scene. Webster cried ‘despotism’ and likened Jackson to ‘James the Second of England, a month before he was compelled to fly the kingdom,’ or to Louis XIV of France, who had the audacity to declare, ‘I AM THE STATE’ . . . . The Senators from Missouri and Kentucky exchanged abusive remarks, with Benton defending the president and Clay recalling Jackson’s propensity to take the law into his own hands by resorting to various forms of physical violence. Both hurled charges of ‘atrocious calumny’ as Tazewell attempted to gavel them to order. . . . The session had been the most exciting and exasperating Tazewell had experienced.”

~ Norma Lois Peterson, *Littleton Waller Tazewell* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1983), 210–212.

**Further Reading:** Sawers, Timothy R. “The Public Career of Littleton Waller Tazewell, 1824–1836.” Ph.D. dissertation, Miami University, 1972.



## 30. Hugh Lawson White (*Tennessee*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1832–1833

*Senate Service:* October 28, 1825, to January 13, 1840

*Party:* Jacksonian; Anti-Jackson; Whig

*Born:* Iredell County, North Carolina, October 30, 1773

*Died:* Knoxville, Tennessee, April 10, 1840

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**Education:** Pursued classical studies in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; studied law in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

**Non-Senate Career:** Prior to pursuing his education in Pennsylvania, Hugh Lawson White became private secretary to William Blount, the territorial governor of Tennessee. In 1793, he participated in an expedition against the Cherokee Indians. After he studied law in Pennsylvania, he returned to Knoxville, was admitted to the bar in 1796, and practiced law. He became judge of the state superior court from 1801 to 1807 and served in Tennessee’s state senate from 1807 to 1809. In 1808 he was appointed United States district attorney, and then served as judge of the state supreme court from 1809 to 1815. He was president of the state bank from 1812 to 1827, and again served in the state senate from 1817 until 1825, when he entered the United States Senate.

**Committee Chair:** Indian Affairs (1827–1840)

**Observations:** “[White’s] grave and venerable form is even now before us—the air of patient attention, of grave deliberation, of unrelaxed firmness. Here his position was of the highest—beloved, respected, honored; always in his place—always prepared for the business at hand—always bringing to it the treasured reflections of a sedate and vigorous understanding.”

~ Senator William Preston of South Carolina, quoted in Kenneth McKellar, *Tennessee Senators, As Seen by One of their Successors* (Kingsport, TN: Southern Publishers, Inc., 1942), 181.

**Further Reading:** Gresham, L. Paul. “The Public Career of Hugh Lawson White.” Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1943; Scott, Nancy, ed. *A Memoir of Hugh Lawson White*. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co., 1856.



## 31. George Poindexter (*Mississippi*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1834

*Senate Service:* October 15, 1830, to March 3, 1835

*Party:* Jacksonian; Anti-Jackson

*Born:* Louisa County, Virginia, in 1779

*Died:* Jackson, Mississippi, September 5, 1853

**Education:** Studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** After he was admitted to the bar in 1800, George Poindexter practiced law in Milton, Virginia. He moved to the Mississippi Territory in 1802 and practiced law in Natchez. In 1805, he was appointed attorney general of the Mississippi Territory. He became a member of the territorial general assembly in 1805 and a delegate to Congress from the Mississippi Territory in 1807. He served as United States district judge for the territory from 1813 until 1817. Poindexter became a member of the U.S. House of Representatives on December 10, 1817, and served in that body until March 3, 1819. In the House, he served as chairman of the Committee on Public Lands from 1817 until 1819. He was then elected governor of Mississippi and served from 1820 until 1822. Following his Senate service, he resumed the practice of law until his death.

**Committee Chair:** Private Land Claims (1831–1833); Public Lands (1833–1835)

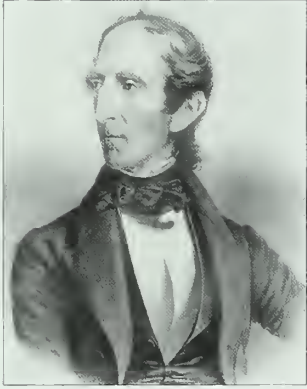
**Observations:** “He was never without a quarrel on his hands, and for the settle of these he used the courts, his fists, his cane, his riding crop, his pistols, and his superb vocabulary of invective.”

~ Mack Swearingen, *The Early Life of George Poindexter*, quoted in “Two Irascible Antebellum Senators,” *Journal of Mississippi History* 46 (February 1984): 20.

“To honor Poindexter for his sharp attack on the administration [during the bank war], the Whig majority chose him, in June of 1834, to be president pro tempore of the Senate. The Jacksonians were furious. Not only were the bitter feelings between Poindexter and Old Hickory well known, but the Mississippian was one of two senators—Calhoun being the other—who were not on good personal terms with Vice President Van Buren. The Democrats regarded his election as an attempt to ‘disgrace the Chair, in which Mr. Van Buren has been placed by the People of the United States.’ One editor said: ‘This man . . . yet rank with the fumes of a low debauch, his step yet tottering, and his eyes rolling with a drunken leer, this man, all filth and vermon [*sic*], called, probably, from a brothel or a gin cellar, to the Senate Chamber, this man, they choose . . . to preside over the Senate of the United States.’”

~ Edwin A. Miles, “Andrew Jackson and Senator George Poindexter,” *The Journal of Southern History* 24 (February 1958): 60.

**Further Reading:** Smith, Suanna. “George Poindexter: A Political Biography.” Ph.D. dissertation, University of Southern Mississippi, 1980; Swearingen, Mack. *The Early Life of George Poindexter*. New Orleans: Tulane University Press, 1934.



## 32. John Tyler (*Virginia*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1835

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1827, to February 29, 1836

*Party:* Democratic Republican; Jacksonian; Anti-Jackson

*Born:* Charles City County, Virginia, March 29, 1790

*Died:* Richmond, Virginia, January 18, 1862

**Education:** Attended private schools; graduated from the College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia, in 1807; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** John Tyler was admitted to Virginia's bar in 1809 and practiced law in Charles City County. He was a member of the state house of delegates from 1811 to 1816 and became captain of a military company in 1813. In 1816, he became a member of the council of state and was then elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, serving from December 17, 1816, to March 3, 1821. He declined to be a candidate for renomination in 1820 because of impaired health. He was again elected to the state house of delegates, serving from 1823 to 1825, before becoming governor of Virginia from 1825 to 1827. While serving as one of Virginia's U.S. senators, he was a delegate to Virginia's state constitutional convention in 1829 and 1830. Following his U.S. Senate service, he became a member of the state house of delegates for a third time in 1839. He was elected vice president of the United States on the Whig ticket with William Henry Harrison in 1840, was inaugurated March 4, 1841, and served until the death of President Harrison on April 4, 1841, when he became president of the United States. He took the oath of

office as president on April 6, 1841, and served until March 3, 1845. He was a delegate to and president of the peace convention held in Washington, D.C., in 1861 in an effort to devise means to prevent the impending war, and a delegate to the Confederate Provisional Congress in 1861 after Virginia seceded from the Union. Although he had been elected to the House of Representatives of the Confederate Congress, he died before the assembling of that Congress.

**Committee Chair:** District of Columbia (1833–1836); Manufactures (1833–1835)

**Observations:** “Tyler received a signal honor at the hands of his colleagues. In the evening of March 3 he was elected president *pro tempore* of the Senate, and for the few hours between six o'clock and midnight he presided over that body.”

~ Oliver P. Chitwood, *John Tyler: Champion of the Old South* (Newtown, CT: American Political Biography Press, 1939/1990), 132.

**Further Reading:** Monroe, Dan. *The Republican Vision of John Tyler*. College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2003.



### 33. William Rufus de Vane King (*Alabama*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1836–1837, 1839–1841, 1850–1852

*Senate Service:* December 14, 1819, to April 15, 1844; July 1, 1848, to December 20, 1852

*Party:* Democratic Republican; Jacksonian; Democrat

*Born:* Sampson County, North Carolina, April 7, 1786

*Died:* “King’s Bend” plantation, Alabama, April 18, 1853

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**Education:** Attended private schools; graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1803; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** William Rufus de Vane King was admitted to the bar in 1806 and practiced law in Clinton, North Carolina. He was a member of the state house of commons from 1807 to 1809 and city solicitor of Wilmington, North Carolina, in 1810. King was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and served from March 4, 1811, until November 4, 1816. He resigned from the House to serve as secretary of the legation at Naples and later at St. Petersburg. He returned to the United States in 1818 and settled in Alabama, where he was a planter. In 1819, he was a delegate to the convention that organized the Alabama state government. Between his two tenures as U.S. senator, from 1844 until 1846, he served as minister to France, and in 1853, he became the 13th vice president of the United States.

**Committee Chair:** Public Lands (1831–1833); Commerce (1831–1833, 1837–1841); Foreign Relations (1849–1851); Pensions (1849–1851)

**Observations:** “The Federal Constitution devolves upon the people, through the medium of the Electoral Colleges, the choice of the presiding officer of this body. But whenever the Senate was called to supply the place temporarily, for a long course of years, and till he ceased to belong to it, it turned spontaneously to [King].”

He undoubtedly owed this honor to distinguished qualifications for the chair. He possessed, in an eminent degree, that quickness of perception, that promptness of decision, that familiarity with the now somewhat complicated rules of congressional proceedings, and that urbanity of manner, which are required in a presiding officer. . . . [King] possessed the rare and the highly important talent of controlling, with impartiality, the storm of debate, and moderating between mighty spirits, whose ardent conflicts at times seemed to threaten the stability of the Republic.

In fact, sir, he was highly endowed with what Cicero beautifully commends as the *boni Senatoris prudentia*, the ‘wisdom of a good Senator;’ and in his accurate study and ready application of the rules of parliamentary law, he rendered a service to the country, not perhaps of the most brilliant kind, but assuredly of no secondary importance.”

~ Senator Edward Everett, *Congressional Globe*, 33rd Cong., 1st sess., December 8, 1853, 20.

**Further Reading:** Martin, John M. “William Rufus King: Southern Moderate.” Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1955; U.S. Congress. *Memorial Addresses*. 33rd Cong., 1st sess., 1853. Washington, D.C.: Armstrong, 1854.



## 34. Samuel Lewis Southard (*New Jersey*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1841–1842

*Senate Service:* January 26, 1821, to March 3, 1823; December 2, 1833, to June 26, 1842

*Party:* Democratic Republican; Anti-Jackson; Whig

*Born:* Basking Ridge, Somerset County, New Jersey, June 9, 1787

*Died:* Fredericksburg, Virginia, June 26, 1842

**Education:** Attended the village school; graduated from the College of New Jersey (now Princeton College) in 1804; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** Samuel Lewis Southard worked as a tutor for a family near Fredericksburg, Virginia, in 1805. He was admitted to Virginia's bar in 1809, moved back to New Jersey, and began practicing law in Flemington in 1811. He was elected to New Jersey's general assembly in 1815 but sat for only a few days before he was appointed associate justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court, serving from 1815 to 1820. Following his first term in the U.S. Senate, he became secretary of the navy, serving for Presidents Monroe and Adams from 1823 to 1829. He also served as secretary of the treasury ad interim in 1825 and secretary of war ad interim in 1828. Southard returned to Trenton after Andrew Jackson's election as president and was appointed attorney general of New Jersey in 1829. He served as governor of New Jersey from 1832 to 1833, before returning to the U.S. Senate.

**Committee Chair:** Naval Affairs (1833–1837)

**Observations:** "The soundness of his judgment, the candor of his disposition, the sweetness of his temper, and the firmness of his adherence to his own sense of right were, to me, as a colleague and a confidential assistant and advisor, a treasure beyond all price."

~ John Quincy Adams, June 28, 1842, quoted in Michael Birkner, *Samuel L. Southard: Jeffersonian Whig* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1984), 198–99.

"The major anxiety afflicting Southard during the early months of the session was breaking the ice on the Senate floor and offering a maiden speech. Despite his legal background and his modest reputation as an orator, Southard had always been nervous about public speaking, and in such a forum as the United States Senate he was practically paralyzed. Opportunities to speak out on various minor issues abounded, but Southard could not bring himself to rise. December and January passed, and still he had not taken the floor. Friends, newspaper editors, and even his father, began to wonder aloud whether he would ever make his speaking debut. Finally in early February, Southard resolved to rise during a secret session of the Senate, when he would not have to face a gallery of interested onlookers. But even though he had points he wanted to make during that session, his paralysis continued to grip him, and he did not rise. 'As I sat in my room at night reflecting on the business of the day,' he later confessed to his wife, 'I felt mortified at my own folly, in not daring to speak when my duty seemed to require it.'"

~ Michael Birkner, *Samuel L. Southard: Jeffersonian Whig* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1984), 55.

**Further Reading:** Ershkowitz, Herbert. "Samuel L. Southard: A Case Study of Whig Leadership in the Age of Jackson." *New Jersey History* 88 (Spring 1970): 5–24.





## 35. Willie Person Mangum (*North Carolina*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1842–1845

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1831, to November 26, 1836; November 25, 1840, to March 3, 1853

*Party:* Jacksonian; Anti-Jackson; Whig

*Born:* Orange (now Durham) County, North Carolina, May 10, 1792

*Died:* Red Mountain, North Carolina, September 7, 1861

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**Education:** Attended academies at Hillsboro, Fayetteville, and Raleigh; graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1815; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** Willie Person Mangum was admitted to the bar in 1817 and practiced law in Red Mountain, North Carolina. He was a member of the state house of representatives from 1818 until 1819 and was twice elected a state superior court judge. In 1823, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and served from March 4, 1823, until March 18, 1826. In 1837, following his first term as U.S. senator, he received South Carolina's 11 electoral votes for president of the United States. Following his second U.S. Senate tenure, he continued to practice law until his death.

**Committee Chair:** Naval Affairs (1841–1843); Printing (1841–1843)

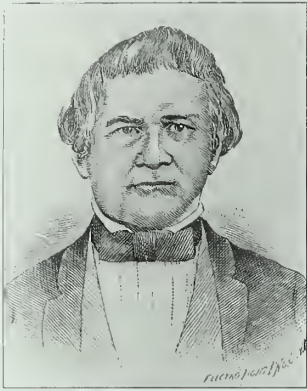
**Observations:** “He presides in the Senate and occupies the Vice-President’s room in the Capitol. He is a man above the common size, of fair complexion and commanding air, rather grave in his manners, but very agreeable and appears to be kind-hearted. His voice is clear, sufficiently loud and distinct to be heard all over the Senate chamber and its gallery. On the whole, he is, taking him all in all, the best presiding officer that I ever saw in any legislative assembly. He is always at his ease, always dignified and always agreeable.”

~ Caleb Atwater, *Mysteries of Washington City, During Several Months of the Session of the 28th Congress* (Washington, D.C.: G. A. Sage, 1844), 131.

“It was in [the Senate] that he made his great reputation. . . . In the Senate he became a hard worker, forceful debater, and capable party leader. . . . On May 31, 1842, Mangum was elected president *pro tempore* of the Senate—a position he held until 1845. Since the Vice President, Tyler, had assumed the office of President on the death of Harrison, Mangum was by virtue of his office next in succession to the presidency. Tyler’s narrow escape from the tragic accident on the *U.S.S. Princeton* in 1844 measured the margin of chance by which Mangum failed to become President. When his position of presiding officer drew to a close on March 4, 1845, he initiated the practice of turning back the clock to lengthen the legislative day of the out-going administration.”

~ Willie Mangum, *The Papers of Willie Person Mangum*, ed. Henry Thomas Shanks (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Archives and History, 1950), 1: xxvii.

**Further Reading:** Hoffmann, William S. “Willie P. Mangum and the Whig Revival of the Doctrine of Instructions.” *Journal of Southern History* 22 (August 1956): 338–54.



## 36. Ambrose Hundley Sevier (*Arkansas*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1845

*Senate Service:* September 18, 1836, to March 15, 1848

*Party:* Jacksonian; Democrat

*Born:* Greene County, Tennessee, November 4, 1801

*Died:* Pulaski County, Arkansas, December 31, 1848

**Education:** Studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** Ambrose Hundley Sevier moved to Arkansas in 1820 and became clerk of the territorial house of representatives in 1821. He was admitted to the bar in 1823, and that same year, was elected to the territorial house of representatives. He served from 1823 to 1827 and was chosen speaker in 1827. In 1828, he became a delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives, serving from February 13, 1828, until June 15, 1836, when Arkansas was admitted to the Union. After serving two terms as one of Arkansas's first U.S. senators, Sevier resigned his Senate seat and was appointed minister to Mexico to negotiate the treaty of peace between that Republic and the United States.

**Committee Chair:** Indian Affairs (1839–1841, 1845–1847); Foreign Relations (1845–1848)

**Observations:** By 1840, Sevier “had already come to realize that he could afford to retain his natural political style in the Senate. That style was direct, exuberant, aggressive, and hostile to any veneer of sophistication. Sevier’s forte was bluntness, a manner befitting his power in Arkansas politics. He often seems to have taken a great delight in flaunting his crudeness and disregard for political niceties.”

~ Brian G. Walton, “Ambrose Hundley in the Senate,” *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 32 (Spring 1973): 38.

Sevier is “a political partisan of the most ultra-radical type. . . . This is one of those rough and tumble geniuses which no country can produce but ours; and in ours, only the extreme western portion.”

~ *New York Express*, quoted in *Arkansas State Gazette*, June 21, 1843.



## 37. David Rice Atchison (*Missouri*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1846–1849, 1852–1854

*Senate Service:* October 14, 1843, to March 3, 1855

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Frogtown, Kentucky, August 11, 1807

*Died:* Near Gower, Clinton County, Missouri, January 26, 1886

**Education:** Attended Transylvania University, Lexington, Kentucky; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** In 1829, David Atchison was admitted to the bar and began practicing law in Liberty, Clay County, Missouri. He also engaged in agricultural pursuits. He became a member of the Missouri state house of representatives in 1834, and again in 1838, and was appointed judge of the Platte County circuit court in 1841. Following his Senate career, he resumed the practice of law.

**Committee Chair:** Militia (1845–1847); Indian Affairs (1847–1853)

**Observations:** “In Missouri, there is a statue of Senator Atchison that identifies him as president of the United States for one day, March 4, 1849. Since the traditional day for presidential inaugurations, then March 4, fell on a Sunday that year, President-elect Zachary Taylor waited until Monday to be sworn in. Senator Atchison based his claim to the presidency that Sunday on the grounds that, as president pro tempore, he was next in the line of succession—although he never took the presidential oath. When asked later about his ‘presidency,’ Senator Atchison liked to say, ‘That was the honestest administration this country ever had.’ Although scholars dismiss Atchison’s claim, he did in fact come close to becoming president four years later. In 1853, on his way to Washington, President-elect Franklin Pierce was in a train wreck that took the life of his only child. If Pierce had not survived the accident, David R. Atchison, as president pro tempore, would have succeeded

to the presidency, since Vice President [William R.] King died a month after the inauguration.”

~ U.S. Congress, Senate, *The Senate, 1789–1989, Addresses on the History of the United States Senate*, by Robert C. Byrd, vol. 2, S. Doc. 100–20, 100th Cong., 1st sess., 1991, 177.

**Further Reading:** Atchison, Theodore. “David R. Atchison, A Study in American Politics.” *Missouri Historical Review* 24 (July 1930): 502–15; Parrish, William E. *David Rice Atchison of Missouri: Border Politician* Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1961.



## 38. Lewis Cass (*Michigan*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1854

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1845, to May 29, 1848; March 4, 1849, to March 3, 1857

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Exeter, New Hampshire, October 9, 1782

*Died:* Detroit, Michigan, June 17, 1866

*Education:* Attended Exeter Academy; studied law.

*Non-Senate Career:* Lewis Cass taught school in Wilmington, Delaware, moved to the Northwest Territory in 1801, and settled on a farm near Zanesville, Ohio. He was admitted to the Ohio bar in 1802 and served in the state house of representatives in 1806. He was United States marshal for the district of Ohio from 1807 to 1812, when he resigned to enlist in the army. From 1813 to 1814, he served in the United States Army, attaining the rank of brigadier general. He was appointed military and civil governor of Michigan Territory, where he served from 1813 to 1831. He settled in Detroit, and in 1831 President Andrew Jackson appointed him secretary of war. He resigned in 1836, having been appointed envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to France. He served in that diplomatic post from 1836 to 1842. He resigned from the Senate when he was nominated for president of the United States but was re-elected to the Senate to fill the same seat when he lost his presidential bid. Following his Senate service, he was secretary of state from 1857 until his resignation in 1860, when he returned to Detroit and engaged in literary pursuits.

*Committee Chair:* Military Affairs (1847–1848)

*Observations:* “His strength of will, his clearness of intellectual vision, his rare judgment of practical matters, his independence of opinion, his fullness of learning, his patience in acquisition, his hours of close and protracted application, his temperate habits and his simple mode of life are too well known to require description. He was a public rather than a public-spirited man, tenacious of his opinion, though affable in his manners; a strong partisan and an obstinate and unyielding opponent.”  
~ 1866 obituary, U.S. Senate Historical Office.

“Few American statesmen have rivaled Cass in the multiplicity of his public duties as soldier, territorial governor, Secretary of War, Minister to France, senatorial leader, presidential nominee, and Secretary of State. He was a firm believer in American democracy and in local sovereignty. He tried to save this nation from Civil War.”

~ Senator Blair Moody, U.S. Congress, Senate, *Congressional Record*, 82nd Cong., 1st sess., A6349.

*Further Reading:* Klunder, Willard C. *Lewis Cass and the Politics of Moderation*. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1996; Woolford, Frank B. *Lewis Cass: The Last Jeffersonian*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1950.



## 39. Jesse David Bright (*Indiana*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1854–1856, 1856–1857, 1860

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1845, to February 5, 1862

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Norwich, Chenango County, New York, December 18, 1812

*Died:* Baltimore, Maryland, May 20, 1875

**Education:** Attended public schools in Madison, Indiana; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** Jesse D. Bright was admitted to the bar in 1831 and practiced law in Madison, Jefferson County, Indiana. In 1834, he became judge of the probate court of Jefferson County. He then served as United States marshal for the district of Indiana from 1840 until 1841. He was a member of the Indiana state senate from 1841 until 1843 and the lieutenant governor of Indiana from 1843 until 1845. After Bright was expelled from the U.S. Senate for supporting the rebellion, he moved to Kentucky and was elected to the Kentucky state house of representatives, serving from 1866 until 1871. He then moved to Baltimore, Maryland, and was president of the Raymond City Coal Co. from 1871 until his death.

**Committee Chair:** Enrolled Bills (1845–1847); Public Buildings (1845–1847); Revolutionary Claims (1847–1849); Roads and Canals (1849–1855); Public Buildings and Grounds (1857–1861)

**Observations:** [Bright] had natural talents of a high order, but was deficient in education and cultivation when he first went to the United States Senate. He is said to have violated rules of grammar not infrequently in his public speeches, but to have been so earnest in

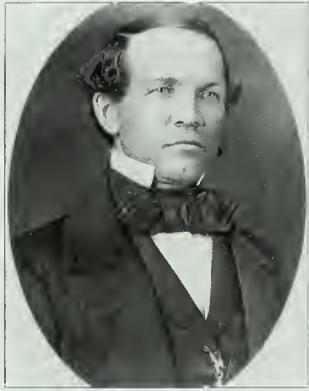
his manner that his words burned into the minds of his hearers. His overwhelming energy and earnestness were great assets in addressing his hearers, and his oratory was that of the circuit lawyer of that time—loud, furious, violent, and heavy with historical comparison and political platitudes.”

~ Charles B. Murphy, *The Political Career of Jesse D. Bright* (Indianapolis: The Society, 1931), 106.

Bright “took the position seriously, and was always scrupulously just in the decisions he rendered regarding ordinary business, and in his decisions when individual members were involved. If he seemed a bit partisan when party benefits could be gained, one must remember that in those days it was common practice for the presiding officer to use his position for the advantage of his party.”

~ Charles B. Murphy, *The Political Career of Jesse D. Bright* (Indianapolis: The Society, 1931), 125.

**Further Reading:** Cooney, Charles F. “Treason or Tyranny? The Great Senate Purge of ’62.” *Civil War Times Illustrated* 18 (July 1979): 30–31; Murphy, Charles. “The Political Career of Jesse Bright.” *Indiana Historical Society Publications* 10 (1931): 101–45.



## 40. Charles Edward Stuart (*Michigan*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1856

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1853, to March 3, 1859

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Near Waterloo, Columbia County, New York, November 25, 1810

*Died:* Kalamazoo, Michigan, May 19, 1887

*Education:* Studied law.

*Non-Senate Career:* Charles Edward Stuart was admitted to the New York bar in 1832 and began practicing law in Waterloo. He moved to Michigan in 1835 and settled in Kalamazoo. In 1842, he served in the state house of representatives and then was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in a special election, serving from December 6, 1847, to March 3, 1849. He served again in the House from March 4, 1851, to March 3, 1853. He was chairman of the House Committee on Expenditures in the Department of State from 1851 to 1853. After serving one term in the U.S. Senate, he resumed the practice of law. During the Civil War he raised and equipped the Thirteenth Regiment, Michigan Volunteer Infantry, of which he was commissioned colonel, but he resigned because of ill health.

*Committee Chair:* Public Lands (1855–1859)

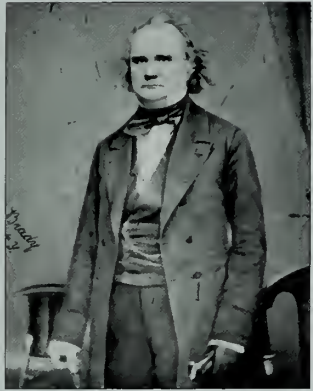
*Observations:* Stuart “was for two terms a member of the United States house of representative and served one term of six years in the United States senate. During his last term of office in the house he moved and

made a persistent effort and accomplished the passage of the law making a landed appropriation for the construction of the Sault St Marie canal—a law that has added more to the wealth of Michigan than almost any other that was ever enacted. Mr. Stuart was one of the very ablest presiding officers of a deliberative assembly that Michigan has ever produced. In his rulings on questions of parliamentary law he was rarely at fault, and in his political positions he always showed remarkable ability and a memory capable of absorbing and retaining a vast amount of knowledge on affairs in general.”

~ 1887 obituary, U.S. Senate Historical Office.

“If I were to characterize [Stuart] in a single sentence, I should say that he had large observation and intuitive knowledge of human nature; a judgment that made few mistakes; remarkable coolness and self-possession; courage, quick decision, and great firmness of will; natural logic in handling facts; and an easy, graceful, and most persuasive eloquence, assisted and set off by an unusually rich and sonorous voice, and a commanding dignity of carriage and gesture.”

~ Eulogy by Charles S. May, 1887, quoted in *The Kalamazoo Daily Telegraph*, November 21, 1894.



## 41. James Murray Mason (*Virginia*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1857

*Senate Service:* January 21, 1847, to March 28, 1861

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Analostan Island, Fairfax County, Virginia (now Theodore Roosevelt Island, Washington, D.C.), November 3, 1798

*Died:* “Clarens,” near Alexandria, Virginia, April 28, 1871

**Education:** Privately tutored at an academy at Georgetown, D.C.; graduated from the University of Pennsylvania at Philadelphia in 1818; graduated from the law department of William and Mary College, Williamsburg, Virginia, in 1820.

**Non-Senate Career:** James Murray Mason was admitted to the bar in 1820 and practiced law in Winchester, Virginia. He was a delegate to the Virginia constitutional convention in 1829 and a member of the state house of delegates in 1826 and again from 1829 until 1831. Mason was a presidential elector on the Democratic ticket in 1832. He served as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from March 4, 1837, until March 3, 1839. After Mason was expelled from the U.S. Senate in 1861 for support of the rebellion, he became a delegate from Virginia to the Provisional Congress of the Confederacy and was appointed commissioner of the Confederacy to Great Britain and France. While on his way to his post, he was taken prisoner from the British mail steamer Trent on November 8, 1861, and confined in Fort Warren, Boston Harbor. He was released in January 1862 and proceeded to London, where he represented the Confederacy until its downfall in April 1865. He resided in Canada after the close of the war until 1868, when he returned to Virginia.

**Committee Chair:** Claims (1847–1849); District of Columbia (1849–1851); Foreign Relations (1851–1861); Naval Affairs (1851–1853)

**Observations:** “True to the high behests of his public duty, [Mason] is diligent in his attention to business, and the record of debates shows that he never hesitates to express his convictions upon all public measures, or to criticize the public conduct of public men. . . . His speeches show a high order of talent, which has been ripened and improved by long experience in political affairs. Arranging the points which he wishes to establish as systematically as Euclid laid down his problems, he so demonstrates their truths as he proceeds, calling to his aid time-honored authorities, that when he arrives at the closing argument the whole is geometrically proven. . . . In person, Senator Mason is stalwart and well-formed, with a fine, imposing head, a pleasing countenance, and a keen eye. One of the few remaining polished links between the statesmen of the past and present generations, his manners are courtly, and the genial warmth of his heart endears him to a large circle of relatives and friends.”

~ *Harper’s Weekly*, March 20, 1858.

**Further Reading:** Bugg, James L., Jr. “The Political Career of James Murray Mason: The Legislative Phase.” Ph.D. dissertation, University of Virginia, 1950.



## 42. Thomas Jefferson Rusk (*Texas*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1857

*Senate Service:* February 21, 1846, to July 29, 1857

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Pendleton District, South Carolina, December 5, 1803

*Died:* Nacogdoches, Texas, July 29, 1857

*Education:* Self-taught; studied law.

*Non-Senate Career:* Thomas Rusk practiced law in Georgia before moving to Nacogdoches, Texas, in 1835. He was a delegate to the convention which declared for the independence of Texas in 1836 and became the first secretary of war of the new Republic. At the Battle of San Jacinto, he took command of the forces and retained command until October 1836, when he resumed his duties as secretary of war. He was a member of the Second Congress of the Republic of Texas and chief justice of the supreme court of Texas from 1838 to 1842. In 1843, he was appointed major general of militia of the Republic of Texas and served as president of the convention that confirmed the annexation of Texas to the United States in 1845.

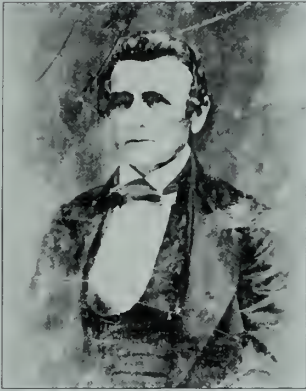
*Committee Chair:* Enrolled Bills (1847–1851); Militia (1847–1849); Engrossed Bills (1847–1849); Post Office and Post Roads (1849–1857)

*Observations:* “Rusk was a most decided partisan, but no man ever doubted his sincerity. In manner he was blunt, frank and out-spoken; and in heart genial and kind. There was no guile in him. His position was always well defined and not to be mistaken. As an adversary he was bold, powerful, earnest and sincere. Conscious of his own integrity he conceded the same virtue to his colleagues. As a friend he was reliable; and in his whole life an exemplification of that true chivalry so often theorized and so seldom to be found. Eminently practical, possessed of an unusual share of plain common sense, liberal in his views of public policy, and ready at all times to join hands with whoever could aid him in accomplishing a public end, regardless of party affiliations, he has made his mark in the Senate Chamber on a host of successful public measures.”

~ *New York Daily Times*, August 5, 1857.

*Further Reading:* Clarke, Mary. *Thomas J. Rusk: Soldier, Statesman, Jurist*. Austin: Jenkins Publishing Company, 1971; Huston, Cleburne. *Towering Texan: A Biography of Thomas J. Rusk*. Waco: Texian Press, 1971.





## 43. Benjamin Fitzpatrick (*Alabama*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1857–1860

*Senate Service:* November 25, 1848, to November 30, 1849; January 14, 1853, to March 3, 1855; November 26, 1855, to January 21, 1861

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Greene County, Georgia, June 30, 1802

*Died:* Near Wetumpka, Alabama, November 21, 1869

**Education:** Attended public schools in Alabama; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** In 1823, Benjamin Fitzpatrick was admitted to the bar and began practicing law in Montgomery, Alabama. He was elected solicitor of the Montgomery circuit and served from 1822 until 1823. A plantation owner, Fitzpatrick also served as governor of Alabama from 1841 until 1845. Following his Senate service, he served as president of the constitutional convention of Alabama in 1865.

**Committee Chair:** Printing (1853–1855); Engrossed Bills (1853–1855)

**Observations:** “The . . . Senator from Alabama, Benjamin Fitzpatrick, was a model of senatorial frankness. . . . He was a plain, old-fashioned miller, and not a man of conspicuous ability. He had not the audacity peculiar to men of dash and skill. . . .”

~ Samuel S. Cox, *Union—Disunion—Reunion: Three Decades of Federal Legislation* (Providence: J.A. & R.A. Reid, 1894), 60, 87.

“In 1855 the [Alabama State] legislature elected Fitzpatrick to serve a full term, which he did with great distinction. During President James Buchanan’s administration, Fitzpatrick was chosen to serve as president pro tempore of the Senate for the three years before the war, the only Alabamian other than [Rufus] King to have this distinction. His senatorial service was recognized as one of personal integrity, dedication, fairmindedness, and commitment to the public trust.”

~ Elbert L. Watson, *Alabama United States Senators* (Huntsville, AL: Strode Publishers, 1982), 51.

**Further Reading:** Roberts, Shepherd H. “Benjamin Fitzpatrick and the Vice-Presidency.” In *Studies in Southern and Alabama History*, ed. George Patrie, 46–53. Montgomery: Alabama Polytechnic Institute, 1904.



# A Question of Succession, 1861–1889

A series of crises, brought on by the Civil War and its aftermath, significantly affected the office of the president pro tempore. No problem was as persistent and troublesome during these years as vacancies. Since its earliest years, the Senate assumed it should elect a president pro tempore only during the absence of a vice president. This system raised many concerns, particularly after the passage of the 1792 Presidential Succession Act which placed the president pro tempore directly behind the vice president. What should senators do at the end of a session or during a recess? Since Congress was customarily out of session for half of each year, what would happen if no one was designated president pro tempore? If the vice president succeeded to the presidency, who would preside at the opening of the next Senate session if a president pro tempore had not been elected? And what if both the president and vice president were to die or become incapacitated in the interim?

Rather than settle these problems by statute or rules changes, the Senate relied for many years upon an informal plan, begun by Vice President Adams, in which the vice president would voluntarily absent himself from the chamber in the final days or hours of the session. This gave senators an opportunity to elect a president pro tempore to serve through the recess period and be available to preside if necessary when they reconvened. If the president died and the vice president advanced to that office, this system assured that a president pro tempore was ready to succeed in the case of another presidential death. Without such a plan in place, the difficulty of travel or of assembling a quorum could mean a delay of weeks or months before

a president pro tempore would be available. Occasionally, some vice presidents who feared the political consequences of placing a senator opposed to the president's policies in the line of succession refused to perform this little courtesy. The resulting vacancies raised concerns about the ability of presidents pro tempore to fulfill their constitutional responsibilities.

Vacancies in the office of vice president raised additional issues of concern. The assassination of President Abraham Lincoln in 1865, and the elevation of Vice President Andrew Johnson to the presidency, resulted in a four-year vacancy in the vice presidency. When the House of Representatives impeached President Johnson in 1868, therefore, the Senate's president pro tempore was next in line of succession should the Senate decide to remove Johnson from office. This put President pro tempore Benjamin Wade in a delicate position. When Johnson's impeachment came



*Had the Senate convicted Andrew Johnson at his impeachment trial, President pro tempore Benjamin Wade, seated here, would have succeeded him as president of the United States.*

to trial in the Senate, Chief Justice Salmon Chase presided, as required by the Constitution in a presidential impeachment trial, but President pro tempore Wade stood next in line to become president. Wade's vote in favor of conviction struck some observers as improper, but President Johnson still won acquittal by the margin of a single vote, preventing Senator Wade from becoming president of the United States. Following the trial, President Johnson recommended legislation to remove the president pro tempore from the line of succession because of that officer's self-interest in producing a vacancy in the White House.

Another critical vacancy occurred in 1881. Senator Allen Thurman, a Democrat from Ohio, was in his third term as president pro tempore when he lost his race for reelection in 1880. When the Senate next convened in special session in March 1881, it was evenly divided between the two major parties—37 Republicans and 37 Democrats—with two Independent members. One of the Independent senators, David Davis of Illinois, announced that he would vote with the Democrats to organize the Senate. This placed considerable pressure on the remaining Independent, Senator William Mahone of Virginia. Senate Democrats had high hopes that Mahone would vote with



**THE BALANCE OF POWER.**  
The Political Complexion of the next Senate.

*Independent Senator William Mahone decided to vote with Republicans in 1881, leaving the Senate evenly divided.*

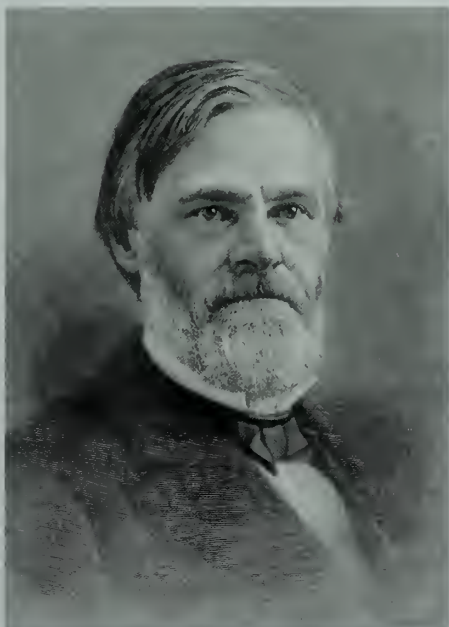
them, establishing the 39 to 37 majority that would give them control of the Senate. At the dramatic moment in the roll call, however, in return for patronage and other promises from the Republican administration, Mahone voted with the Republicans, splitting the Senate 38 to 38. That gave Republican Vice President Chester Arthur the tie-breaking vote, allowing Republicans to organize the Senate and establish a Republican majority. Concerned that the slender one-vote majority margin could be altered by a single death, resignation, or change of party, Vice President Arthur refused to relinquish the presiding officer's chair to allow for the election of a president pro tempore.

Six months later, on September 19, 1881, President James Garfield died from wounds suffered during an assassination attempt, elevating Vice President Arthur to the presidency. Subsequently, when Arthur called the Senate into special session the following month, both the vice presidency and the office of president pro tempore were vacant. To complicate matters further, two Republican senators had resigned from office in May, and the Democrats now held a small numerical majority in the Senate. They elected the Independent David B. Davis as president pro tempore. Faced with possible deadlock in the Senate, Davis orchestrated a compromise that placed the Republicans in control of the Senate's committees but allowed Democrats to elect the Senate's officers and to appoint patronage positions.

A few years later, a vacancy once again left the Senate without a presiding officer. The election of 1884 put Grover Cleveland in the



*In 1881, with the Senate almost equally divided between Republicans and Democrats, President pro tempore David Davis arranged a compromise that permitted the Senate to proceed with its business.*



*Senator John Sherman served as president pro tempore from 1885 to 1887.*

White House and made former Indiana Senator Thomas Hendricks vice president. Although Democrats held the White House and a majority in the House of Representatives, Republicans had a nine-vote majority in the Senate. Presiding continuously through the special session of the Senate that ran from March 4 to April 2, 1885, Democrat Hendricks prevented the Republicans from electing a president pro tempore. Consequently, when Hendricks died on November 25 of that year, several weeks before the opening of the regular first session of the 49th Congress, the Senate lacked both a vice president and

a president pro tempore. The House of Representatives had not yet elected a Speaker, leaving both houses of Congress without a presiding officer and the line of succession empty. When the Senate convened on December 7, 1885, Secretary of the Senate Anson McCook sat in the presiding officer's chair, thanks to an 1884 rules revision. This proved to be one of the very rare occasions when someone other than a vice president or senator has presided over the Senate. The Senate proceeded immediately to elect a president pro tempore, Ohio Republican John Sherman, and the House likewise elected a new Speaker, assuring an orderly succession in case of another presidential death.

Vacancies also raised issues of temporary replacements. Beginning in 1820, Senate rules allowed the vice president or the president pro tempore to appoint a temporary replacement when the need arose. In 1847, however, when Vice President George Dallas requested that Senator David Atchison preside during an anticipated one-day absence, the Senate ignored Dallas' request. It subsequently chose Atchison as president pro tempore through a formal Senate election, suggesting

that the power to make temporary appointments rested solely with the Senate. When the Senate revised its rules in 1877, the reworded language of the rules implied that only the president pro tempore, not the vice president, had the authority to choose a temporary replacement, but the method of appointment remained unclear. In 1882, President pro tempore David Davis, temporarily absent from the chamber, sought to appoint Senator John Ingalls to the chair by letter. The Senate objected, and suspended business until Davis returned to the chamber. Finally, when the Senate again revised its rules in the 1880s, it more clearly defined the powers of the vice president and president pro tempore, specifying that the vice president lacked authority to make a temporary replacement since the Constitution specifically stated that the Senate shall choose its president pro tempore.

The frequent vacancies in the vice presidency and the office of president pro tempore caused Senator George F. Hoar of Massachusetts to call for a revision of the Presidential Succession Act. "The present arrangement is bad," he told the Senate in 1886, because "during a large portion of the term there is no officer in being who can succeed." Hoar also argued that the Senate did not elect its presidents pro tempore based on any consideration of their fitness to become chief executive. By then, the president pro tempore was a senior senator, chosen for his popularity or "for his capacity as a debater and a framer of legislation." Most likely, the president pro tempore had "little or no executive experience" and was therefore unqualified to succeed to the presidency. Instead, the Massachusetts senator favored placing the members of the president's cabinet in the line of succession. No president pro tempore had ever served as president, Hoar pointed out, and only one had even been a candidate for president. By contrast, six secretaries of state had been elected president. Following Hoar's reasoning, in 1886 Congress responded to longstanding concerns about the 1792 Succession Act by removing its two presiding officers from the line of succession and substituting the president's cabinet members, by rank, beginning with the secretary of state.





## 44. Solomon Foot (*Vermont*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1861–1864

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1851, to March 28, 1866

*Party:* Whig; Opposition; Republican

*Born:* Cornwall, Addison County, Vermont, November 19, 1802

*Died:* Washington, D.C., March 28, 1866

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**Education:** Pursued classical studies; graduated from Middlebury (Vermont) College in 1826; studied law.

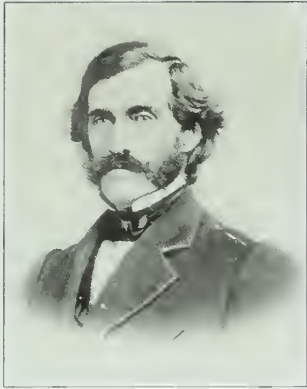
**Non-Senate Career:** Solomon Foot taught school in Vermont from 1826 to 1831. He was admitted to the bar in 1831 and practiced law in Rutland, Vermont. In 1833, he served in Vermont's state house of representatives, and again from 1836 to 1838. He was speaker the last two sessions. In 1836, he was chosen as a delegate to the state constitutional convention, and then served as prosecuting attorney from 1836 to 1842. He was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1843, serving from March 4, 1843, to March 3, 1847.

**Committee Chair:** Public Buildings and Grounds (1861–1866)

**Observations:** In an 1866 Senate Chamber funeral oration, Senator Charles Sumner (R-MA) described Foot's talents as presiding officer. "His presence [at the desk] was felt instantly. It filled this Chamber from floor to gallery. It attached itself to everything that was done. . . . Order was enforced with no timorous authority. If disturbance came from the gallery how promptly he launched his fulmination. If it came from the floor you have often seen him throw himself back, and then with the voice of lordship, as if all the Senate was in him, insist that debate should be suspended until order was restored. 'The Senate must come to order,' he exclaimed; and meanwhile, like the god Thor, he beat his ivory hammer, in unison with his voice, until the reverberations rattled like thunder in the mountains."

~ U.S. Congress, Senate, *Congressional Globe*, 39th Cong., 1st sess., 1911.

**Further Reading:** U.S. Congress. *Memorial Addresses for Solomon Foot*. 39th Cong., 1st sess. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1865.



## 45. Daniel Clark (*New Hampshire*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1864–1865

*Senate Service:* June 27, 1857, to July 27, 1866

*Party:* Republican

*Born:* Stratham, New Hampshire, October 24, 1809

*Died:* Manchester, New Hampshire, January 2, 1891

**Education:** Attended the common schools, Hampton Academy, and Union College, Schenectady, New York; graduated from Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire, in 1834; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** Daniel Clark was admitted to the bar in 1837 and practiced law in Epping, New Hampshire. He served several terms in the state house of representatives between 1842 and 1855. Following his U.S. Senate service, he was a United States district judge from 1866 until his death. Clark was also the president of the New Hampshire constitutional convention in 1876.

**Committee Chair:** Claims (1861–1866)

**Observations:** Clark “was an uncompromising opponent of slavery and, during the campaign of 1854–55, spoke in every part of the state against the Kansas-Nebraska Bill. . . . [In] 1857, the Republican caucus of the New Hampshire legislature needed only one ballot to nominate

Clark [for the Senate], who was then elected to complete the remaining four years of [Senator James] Bell’s term. Clark entered the Thirty-fifth Congress on 27 June 1857. He was reelected in 1860, and his strong voice of support for the Union was heard frequently in Washington, D.C., during the Civil War. Senator Clark gained recognition through his service on several committees . . . and as president pro tempore of the Senate. . . . He was also acknowledged as an accomplished debater, on a par with Senate notables such as Charles Sumner. But some who sought reconciliation with the South criticized him for his uncompromising opposition to slavery, secession, and northern sympathizers. Clark made his thoughts clear, as during the Kansas-Nebraska debates, when he stated, ‘We have had enough of bowing down, and the people in my region have got sick of it.’ When those southern senators whose state had seceded from the Union left their seats in the chamber, Clark offered the resolution suspending them on 11 July 1861.”

~ *American National Biography.*





## 46. Lafayette Sabine Foster (*Connecticut*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1865–1867

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1855, to March 3, 1867

*Party:* Opposition; Republican

*Born:* Franklin, New London County, Connecticut, November 22, 1806

*Died:* Norwich, Connecticut, September 19, 1880

**Education:** Attended the common schools; received preparatory instruction and graduated from Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, in 1828; studied law in Norwich; returned to Norwich, Connecticut, and completed his law studies.

**Non-Senate Career:** Lafayette Foster taught school in Providence, Rhode Island, before taking charge of an academy at Centerville, Maryland. While there, he was admitted to the Maryland bar in 1830, and then admitted to the Connecticut bar in 1831. He practiced law in Connecticut and became editor of the *Republican*, a Whig newspaper. He served in the state house of representatives from 1839 to 1840, 1846 to 1848, and again in 1854, serving as speaker of the house for three years. He was an unsuccessful Whig candidate for governor of Connecticut in 1850 and again in 1851. He was mayor of Norwich from 1851 to 1852, and after serving in the United States Senate, he became professor of law at Yale College in 1869. He then served again as a member of the state house of representatives in 1870, and was elected speaker but resigned to accept a judicial position. He was associate justice of the Connecticut supreme court from 1870 to 1876.

**Committee Chair:** Pensions (1861–1867)

**Observations:** “Prominent [in the Senate Chamber] appears the serious face of Mr. Foster. He is undoubtedly one of the ablest presiding officers the Senate has ever possessed. Familiar with parliamentary law, strictly adhering to the forms and customs of the Senate, inflexible in maintaining order and decorum, yet ever kind and courteous, he sits like a stern old judge of ancient times, dispensing justice without fear and without favor.”

~ W. H. W. Campbell, *Memorial Sketch of Lafayette S. Foster* (Boston: Franklin Press, 1881), 41.

“Mr. Foster’s career was long and distinguished. He traced his lineage from Miles Standish and other Puritans, and was the son of a Revolutionary patriot. . . . Well read, apt at quotation, quick at repartee, brimful of genial humor, kindly in spirit, and possessed of a rare wife, he understood the art of hospitality to perfection. He acquired during the long years of his honest industry a handsome competence.”

~ *New York Times*, September 20, 1880.



## 47. Benjamin Franklin Wade (*Ohio*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1867–1869

*Senate Service:* March 15, 1851, to March 3, 1869

*Party:* Whig; Opposition; Republican

*Born:* Feeding Hills, near Springfield, Hampden County, Massachusetts, October 27, 1800

*Died:* Jefferson, Ashtabula County, Ohio, March 2, 1878

**Education:** Received his early education from his mother; studied medicine in Albany, New York, 1823–1825; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** As a young man in Ohio, Benjamin Franklin Wade worked as a farmer, drover, and school teacher. He was admitted to the bar in 1828 and began practicing law in Jefferson, Ashtabula County, Ohio. From 1835 until 1837, Wade served as prosecuting attorney of Ashtabula County. He became a member of the state senate in 1837. He was not reelected in 1839, but was returned to the state senate for a second term in 1841. He was judge of the third judicial court of Ohio from 1847 until 1851. After his long tenure in the U.S. Senate, Wade became a government director of the Union Pacific Railroad and was appointed to the Santo Domingo Commission in 1871.

**Committee Chair:** Territories (1861–1867)

**Observations:** “The choice of Hon. B.F. Wade, of Ohio, as presiding officer, in place of Mr. [Lafayette] Foster, whose term expires today, is eminently satisfactory to the loyal party. It will inspire confidence throughout the country, for no member of that body has been more faithful and fearless in the cause of loyalty and freedom. He is neither afraid to express honest opinions, nor to do his duty; and in the event of the impeachment of President [Andrew] Johnson, the nation would feel that its interests would be entrusted to competent hands.”

~ *Chicago Tribune*, March 4, 1867.

**Further Reading:** Shover, Kenneth. “The Life of Benjamin F. Wade.” Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1962; Trefousse, Hans L. *Benjamin Franklin Wade: Radical Republican from Ohio*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1963.



## 48. Henry Bowen Anthony (*Rhode Island*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1869–1873, 1875

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1859, to September 2, 1884

*Party:* Republican

*Born:* Coventry, Rhode Island, April 1, 1815

*Died:* Providence, Rhode Island, September 2, 1884

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**Education:** Attended a private school in Providence, Rhode Island; graduated from Brown University in 1833.

**Non-Senate Career:** Henry Anthony was editor of the *Providence Journal* in 1838, and afterwards became one of its owners. He was elected governor of Rhode Island in 1849 and reelected in 1850. He declined to be a candidate for renomination and became a United States senator in 1859.

**Senate Offices:** Republican Conference chairman (1861–1884)

**Committee Chair:** Printing (1861–1884); Revolutionary Claims (1871–1884)

**Observations:** “He had come to be the depository of [the Senate’s] traditions, customs and unwritten rules. . . . He seemed somehow the intimate friend of every man in the Senate, on both sides. Every one of his colleagues poured out his heart to him. It seemed that no eulogy or funeral was complete unless Anthony had taken part in it, because he was reckoned [as a protecting] friend of the man who was dead.”

~ George F. Hoar, *Autobiography of Seventy Years* (New York: C. Scribner’s Sons, 1903), 2: 53.

**Further Reading:** U.S. Congress. *Memorial Addresses for Henry B. Anthony*. 48th Cong., 2nd sess. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1885.



## 49. Matthew Hale Carpenter (*Wisconsin*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1873–1875

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1869, to March 3, 1875; March 4, 1879, to February 24, 1881

*Party:* Republican

*Born:* Moretown, Washington County, Vermont, December 22, 1824

*Died:* Washington, D.C., February 24, 1881

**Education:** Attended the common schools; attended the United States Military Academy at West Point for two years; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** Matthew Hale Carpenter was admitted to the bar in 1847 and practiced law for a short time in Boston, Massachusetts. In 1848, he moved to Beloit, Wisconsin. He served as district attorney of Rock County, Wisconsin, from 1850 until 1854. In 1858, Carpenter moved to Milwaukee, where he continued to practice law and became active in politics.

**Committee Chair:** Enrolled Bills (1871–1873); Audit and Control the Contingent Expense (1871–1875)

**Observations:** “I have seen him in the most heated discussions in the Senate, in committee and at the bar, when the coolest and most experienced man might have been excused for an angry word or, at least, an angry look, and yet I cannot recall a single instance in which he lost his temper. Had this self-command been the result of a cold temperament, a want of proper sensibility or an unfeeling heart, it would afford them no commendation. But when it was found in a man of an ardent nature, of the keenest sensibility, and of the warmest affections, too much can scarcely be said in its praise.”

~ Senator Allen G. Thurman, *Washington Post*, March 8, 1881.

**Further Reading:** Deutsch, Herman J. “Carpenter and the Senatorial Election of 1875 in Wisconsin.” *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 16 (September 1932): 26–46; Thompson, E. Bruce. *Matthew Hale Carpenter, Webster of the West*. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1954.



## 50. Thomas White Ferry (*Michigan*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1875–1879

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1871, to March 3, 1883

*Party:* Republican

*Born:* Mackinac Island, Michigan, June 10, 1827

*Died:* Grand Haven, Michigan, October 13, 1896

**Education:** Attended public schools.

**Non-Senate Career:** Thomas White Ferry worked as a clerk in Illinois before returning to Michigan and becoming a partner in his father's lumber business. He served in the state house of representatives from 1850 to 1852, after a term on the Grand Haven board of supervisors. He was a member of the state senate in 1856 and a delegate to the Loyalist Convention at Philadelphia in 1866. He served in the U.S. House of Representatives from March 4, 1865, to March 3, 1871, before becoming a U.S. senator.

**Committee Chair:** Rules (1873–1879); Post Office and Post Roads (1877–1879, 1881–1883)

**Observations:** “Senator Ferry is one of the youngest members of the body. He is a good presiding officer and has a fair knowledge of parliamentary law. He was selected for President *pro tempore* on this account, particularly as it was claimed the office should be given to the West. He was not chosen with reference to the possibility of the death of the President or

Vice President. . . There will undoubtedly be an effort to choose another Senator, with special reference to the new importance with which the office is invested by the death of the Vice President. Who may be chosen, or, indeed, who may be candidates, cannot yet be foretold other than this. The ‘courtesies of the Senate,’ as a kind of code of unwritten rules has come to be called, may prevent any serious movement against Mr. Ferry. There is nothing to be said against his retaining the Presidency of the body, except that he is a young Senator, not of great experience in public affairs, and would not have been selected if the considerations which must now control the Senate in its choice had then existed.”

~ *New York Times*, November 24, 1875.

**Further Reading:** Ziewacz, Lawrence E. “The Eighty-First Ballot: The Senatorial Struggle of 1883.” *Michigan History* 56 (Fall 1972): 216–32.



## 51. Allen Granberry Thurman (*Ohio*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1879–1880

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1869, to March 3, 1881

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Lynchburg, Virginia, November 13, 1813

*Died:* Columbus, Franklin County, Ohio, December 12, 1895

**Education:** Attended the Chillicothe Academy in Chillicothe, Ohio; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** In 1834, Allen G. Thurman was employed as the private secretary to the Ohio governor. He was admitted to the bar in 1835 and practiced law in Ohio. He was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and served from March 4, 1845, until March 3, 1847. He became an associate justice of the supreme court of Ohio in 1851, and in 1854, he was named chief justice. In 1856, he returned to the practice of law in Columbus, Ohio. Following his Senate service, he resumed the practice of law in Ohio. President James Garfield appointed him a member of the international monetary conference in Paris in 1881. In 1888, he ran unsuccessfully for vice president of the United States on the Democratic ticket.

**Committee Chair:** Private Land Claims (1871–1879); Judiciary (1879–1881)

**Observations:** “The sudden and unexpected departure of Vice-President [William A.] Wheeler today has given the Democrats entire control of the Senate much sooner than they had expected, and they can now make removals of Republican officials and fill their places

with Democrats with the necessary approval of the presiding officer. When Mr. Wheeler’s letter vacating the chair was read by the Secretary of the Senate at the opening of the session, the Republicans were in the majority, but they waived this accidental grant of power, and the Senate took a recess, while messengers were sent in every direction for absent Democratic Senators. What made it more annoying to the Democrats present was that among the absentees was Senator Thurman, who had been designated in their caucus for the position of President pro tempore. After waiting about a quarter of an hour the well-known form of Mr. Thurman was seen entering the Senate chamber, wiping the perspiration from his forehead with his scarlet bandanna handkerchief. Other Democratic Senators had meanwhile arrived, and Mr. Thurman was immediately elected and installed. Having served two years in the House of Representatives and upwards of ten years in the Senate, Mr. Thurman is well acquainted with the rules, and is a good presiding officer.”

~ *Chicago Tribune*, April 16, 1879.

**Further Reading:** Carroll, Howard. “Allen Thurman.” In *Twelve Americans: Their Lives and Times*. 331–54. 1883. Reprint. Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1971; Hare, John S. “Allen G. Thurman: A Political Study.” Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1933.



## 52. Thomas Francis Bayard, Sr. (*Delaware*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1881

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1869, to March 6, 1885

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Wilmington, Delaware, October 29, 1828

*Died:* Dedham, Massachusetts, September 28, 1898

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**Education:** Attended private school in Flushing, New York; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** Thomas Bayard, Sr., was admitted to the bar in 1851 and practiced law in Wilmington, Delaware. He was appointed United States district attorney for Delaware in 1853, but resigned in 1854. He resigned from the U.S. Senate when President Grover Cleveland appointed him secretary of state, where he served from 1885 to 1889. He was ambassador to Great Britain from 1893 to 1897.

**Committee Chair:** Engrossed Bills (1873–1879); Finance (1879–1881); Private Land Claims (1881–1885)

**Observations:** “In the history of the past 30 years Mr. Bayard bore no slight or unimportant part. He won the respect of his political adversaries even in the times of sharpest controversy, and however men have differed with him on matters of public interests, none ever failed to recognize his ability as an orator or his high personal character.”

~ *Boston Daily Globe*, September 29, 1898.

**Further Reading:** Tansill, Charles. *The Congressional Career of Thomas F. Bayard*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1946.



## 53. David Davis (*Illinois*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1881–1883

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1877, to March 3, 1883

*Party:* Independent

*Born:* Near Cecilton, Cecil County, Maryland, March 9, 1815

*Died:* Bloomington, McLean County, Illinois, June 26, 1886

**Education:** Attended the public schools of Maryland; graduated from Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio, in 1832; studied law in Lenox, Massachusetts, and at the law school in New Haven, Connecticut, graduating in 1835.

**Non-Senate Career:** After being admitted to the bar in 1835, David Davis settled in Illinois and began to practice law. He became a member of the state house of representatives in 1844 and was a delegate to the state constitutional convention in 1847. Davis served as judge of the eighth judicial circuit of Illinois from 1848 until 1862, when President Lincoln appointed him an associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, where he served until 1877, when he retired to enter the U.S. Senate. Following his Senate service, he retired from public life.

**Observations:** “He was a Republican before and during the [Civil] War, and a steadfast supporter of [President Abraham] Lincoln’s policies. His opinions had been in general in support of the liberal construction of the Constitution, under which the National powers had been exerted to put down the Rebellion. He was elected to the Senate, after resigning his

place on the Supreme Court Bench, by a union of Democrats of the Illinois Legislature with a few discontented Republicans, defeating [Republican Senator John A.] Logan. When he came to the Senate he preserved his position as an Independent. He did not go into the caucuses of either party. . . . His seat was on the Republican side. When there was a division, if he voted with the Republicans, he sat in his seat, or rose in his seat if there was a rising vote; but when, as not unfrequently happened, he voted with the Democrats, he always left his seat and went over to the Democratic side of the Chamber, and stood there until his name was called, or his vote counted. As he passed [New York Republican Senator Roscoe] Conkling one day in one of these movings, Conkling called out: ‘Davis, do you get travel [reimbursement] for all these journeys?’”

~ George F. Hoar, *Autobiography of Seventy Years* (New York: C. Scribner’s Sons, 1903), 2: 64–65.

**Further Reading:** King, Willard. *Lincoln’s Manager: David Davis*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960; Pratt, Harry. “David Davis, 1815–1886.” Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1930.





## 54. George Franklin Edmunds (*Vermont*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1883–1885

*Senate Service:* April 3, 1866, to November 1, 1891

*Party:* Republican

*Born:* Richmond, Chittenden County, Vermont, February 1, 1828

*Died:* Pasadena, California, February 27, 1919

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**Education:** Attended the common schools and was privately tutored; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** George Edmunds was admitted to the bar in 1849 and practiced law in Burlington, Vermont. He was a member of the state house of representatives from 1854 to 1859, serving three years as speaker, and a member of the state senate, serving as its presiding officer in 1861 and 1862. After his U.S. Senate service, he resumed the practice of law in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and subsequently moved to Pasadena, California.

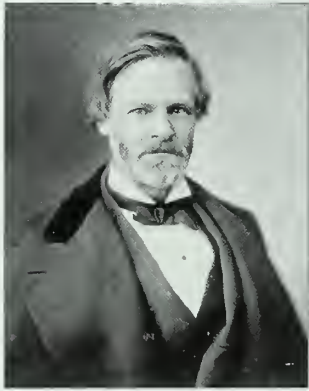
**Senate Offices:** Republican Conference chairman (1885–1891)

**Committee Chair:** Pensions (1869–1873); Judiciary (1871–1879, 1881–1891); Private Land Claims (1879–1881); Foreign Relations (1881–1883)

**Observations:** “Mr. Edmunds is fifty-five years old, and he has sat in the Senate for seventeen years. During that long term his constructive talent has been as evident as his ascendancy in debate and his mastery of Constitutional law. He is not an orator, but he is a thoroughly equipped debater, an acute and remorseless critic of fallacy and fustian and ignorance, with a memory like a well-ordered arsenal, in which every weapon stands brightly burnished and ready for instant use. His elevation to the Presidency of the Senate was but a fitting honor from his party associates, and it properly fills the gap—which would have been perilous had it been left unfilled—produced by the expiration of Mr. [David] Davis’s Senatorial term.”

~ *Harper’s Weekly Magazine*, March 17, 1883.

**Further Reading:** Adler, Selig. “The Senatorial Career of George Franklin Edmunds, 1866–1891.” Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1934; Welch, Richard E., Jr. “George Edmunds of Vermont: Republican Half-Breed.” *Vermont History* 36 (Spring 1968): 64–73.



## 55. John Sherman (*Ohio*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1885–1887

*Senate Service:* March 21, 1861, to March 8, 1877; March 4, 1881, to March 4, 1897

*Party:* Republican

*Born:* Lancaster, Fairfield County, Ohio, May 10, 1823

*Died:* Washington, D.C., October 22, 1900

**Education:** Attended the common schools and an academy in Ohio; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** As a young man, John Sherman worked as an engineer on canal projects. He was admitted to the bar in 1844 and practiced law in Mansfield, Ohio. He served as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from March 4, 1855, until March 21, 1861. In the House, he chaired the Committee on Ways and Means from 1859 to 1861. Following his first tenure in the U.S. Senate, Sherman was secretary of the treasury in President Rutherford Hayes' cabinet from 1877 to 1881. Following his second tenure in the Senate, he became secretary of state in President William McKinley's cabinet, serving from 1897 to 1898.

**Senate Offices:** Republican Conference chairman (1884–1885, 1891–1897)

**Committee Chair:** Agriculture (1863–1867); Finance (1863–1865, 1867–1877); Library (1881–1887); Foreign Relations (1885–1893, 1895–1897)

**Observations:** “‘Will the death of Mr. Hendricks have any effect upon the organization of the Senate?’ a reporter asked. ‘None whatever,’ replied Senator John Sherman. ‘The organization of the Senate rests entirely with the Senators. Of course, the Vice-President is our President, but it is customary for the Senate to elect a President *pro tempore*. Mr. Hendricks, however, was so regular in his attendance at the last session of the Senate that we did not elect one. The first thing to be done when the Senate next convenes is for the Clerk to announce the death of the Vice-President. Somebody will then move that a ballot be taken for a President of the Senate, and the matter will be settled in half an hour. I cannot say who will be selected. The place is not a very desirable one, and the death of Mr. Hendricks is so sudden that, of course, nobody has given the matter a thought.’”

~ Senator John Sherman, reported in the *New York Times*, November 26, 1885.

**Further Reading:** Burton, Theodore. *John Sherman*. 1906. Reprint. New York: AMS Press, 1972; Sherman, John. *Recollections of Forty Years in the House, Senate, and Cabinet*. 1895. Reprint. 2 vols. New York: Greenwood Press, 1968.



## 56. John James Ingalls (*Kansas*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1887–1891

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1873, to March 3, 1891

*Party:* Republican

*Born:* Middleton, Essex County, Massachusetts, December 29, 1833

*Died:* East Las Vegas, New Mexico, August 16, 1900

**Education:** Attended the public schools in Haverhill, Massachusetts, and was privately tutored; graduated from Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts, in 1855; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** John Ingalls was admitted to the bar in 1857. He moved to Kansas in 1858 and became a member of the state constitutional convention in 1859. He was named secretary of the Territorial Council in 1860 and secretary of the state senate in 1861. During the Civil War he served as judge advocate of the Kansas Volunteers. He again served in the state senate in 1862 and was an unsuccessful candidate for lieutenant governor of Kansas in 1862 and 1864. He edited the *Atchison Champion* from 1863 to 1865 and aided in founding the *Kansas Magazine*. Following his Senate service, he devoted his time to journalism, literature, and farming until his death.

**Committee Chair:** Pensions (1875–1879); District of Columbia (1881–1891)

**Observations:** “During the exciting debate in the Senate the other day Mr. Ingalls sat in the president’s chair with his elbows on the desk

and his face in his hands. Spread open before him was a book in old-fashioned binding, and he bent his head low over it as it absorbed all his attention. The sands in the hour glass alongside him had run their course unnoticed; the eloquence of the gentleman discussing the tariff, pensions, the Administration, and painting pictures of Presidential candidates failed to attract him from his book. He was as intent as a schoolboy on a lesson that must be learned or a boy who has absented himself from school over a dime novel. His legs were drawn under his chair, and he seemed to drink in the lines. He was completely absorbed. He was preparing for a speech and was exciting picturesque expressions and apt epithets in his own mind by associating with Homer. The richness and wide range of the great Greek kindle the fires of the Kansas Senator and reflect a force and quaintness in his expression. Before making a speech Mr. Ingalls prepared himself this way.”

~ *New York Times*, March 10, 1888.

**Further Reading:** Ingalls, John. *A Collection of the Writings of John Ingalls*. Edited by William Connelley. Kansas City: Hudson-Kimberly Co., 1902; Williams, Burton. *Senator John James Ingalls, Kansas’ Iridescent Republican*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1972.



# Fathers of the Senate, 1890–1946

**B**y 1890, senators' concern for the office of president pro tempore led to a resolution that fundamentally changed it from a temporary to a continuous office. Since the Senate appointed presidents pro tempore only during the absences of the vice president, during each session, several senators might serve briefly as president pro tempore, or one senator might be elected to perform the functions on multiple occasions. Those who held the post found that its formal duties were as much a chore as an honor, requiring them to preside for long hours over lengthy debates and tedious speeches or persuade other senators to temporarily take their place. In order to give the post more stature and continuity, senators proposed that the term of a president pro tempore should last until another was elected, meaning that someone might hold the office through several Congresses. Meanwhile, during the era between the 1890s and the Second World War, vice presidents continued to preside regularly over the debates of the Senate.

Early in 1889, several senators introduced resolutions specifying that the president pro tempore's term should not expire upon the return of the vice president from an absence, but should continue "at the pleasure of the Senate." These resolutions were referred to the Committee on Privileges and Elections. Supporters of the change pointed out that the Constitution made the vice president the "President of the Senate," but did not require him to preside, nor did the Constitution specifically limit the tenure of the president pro tempore. This argument did not meet with universal

favor. Senator James Z. George, a Democrat from Mississippi, voiced a strictly literal interpretation that the constitutional provision allowing for the Senate to elect a president pro tempore "in the absence of the Vice-President" meant exactly that. About a year later, in February 1890, the Committee on Privileges and Elections reported out a resolution calling for continuous service.

Senators who supported the change noted that while the president pro tempore at that time no longer held a place in the line of succession to the presidency, the post still had important duties. An unexpected absence by the vice president could leave the Senate without a presiding officer, particularly if a quorum was lacking to elect a president pro tempore. They urged the change for the "convenience of the Senate." Republicans holding the majority in the Senate of the 51st Congress supported the measure, while most Democrats remained skeptical, with Mississippi's James George lamenting that "this great constitutional question, which has been settled by the practice of a hundred years,

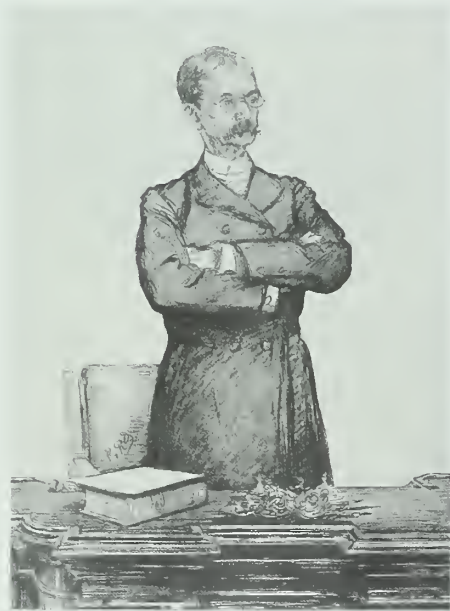


*Senator James Z. George believed that the Senate should elect a president pro tempore only in the absence of the vice president.*

has recently undergone revision in the high court of the Republican caucus.” In the end, the supporters prevailed. The committee’s resolution, adopted on March 12, 1890, read:

*Resolved*, That it is competent for the Senate to elect a President *pro tempore*, who shall hold the office during the pleasure of the Senate and until another is elected, and shall execute the duties thereof during all future absences of the Vice-President until the Senate shall otherwise order.

On April 3, 1890, the first president *pro tempore* elected under the new rule was Kansas Republican Senator John J. Ingalls, marking the fifth time between 1887 and 1890 that the Senate named him to the post. Senator Ingalls, however, was defeated for reelection to the Senate that year, and, in March 1891, the Senate elected Charles F. Manderson, a Nebraska Republican, who held the post continuously until Democrats regained the majority. When Republicans again took control in the 54th Congress, they elected Maine Senator William P.



The sharp-tongued John J. Ingalls served as president *pro tempore* from 1887 to 1891.

Frye president *pro tempore* on February 7, 1896. Republicans held the majority for 18 years and Frye held the post continuously for 15 years until ill health forced him to step down in 1911.

Senator Frye’s death and the subsequent vacancy caused difficulties for his party. By 1911, the Republican party had split into progressive and conservative wings. Conservatives nominated as president *pro tempore* Jacob H. Gallinger of New Hampshire, who initially won the endorsement of the party conference. In the full Senate, however, progressive Republicans refused to accept Gallinger and instead nominated Minnesota Senator



In 1911, a Senate deadlock prevented the election of a president *pro tempore* and tied up Senate business for weeks. A compromise finally resulted in Democrat Augustus Bacon (left) and Republican Jacob Gallinger (right), who looked remarkably similar, alternating days on which they presided.

Moses Clapp. Democrats chose Georgia Senator Augustus Bacon. In the three-way race that followed, no one gained the absolute majority that the Senate, by custom, had required for election to that office. Repeatedly in May and June of 1911, the Senate tried but failed to elect a president *pro tempore*. In desperation and spurred by the precarious health of Vice President James Schoolcraft Sherman—who eventually died in office—the Senate agreed to a compromise. The Democrat, Augustus Bacon, would rotate in office with Republican Jacob Gallinger, each presiding on alternate days. Three other Republicans, Charles Curtis, Henry Cabot Lodge, and Frank Brandegee, were also elected as presidents *pro tempore* for short periods as needed. This awkward arrangement ended in 1913 when Democrats regained the majority following the 1912 election and elected Senator James P. Clarke of Arkansas as president *pro tempore*.

Controversy erupted again in 1923 following the death of President Warren G. Harding, which elevated Vice President Calvin Coolidge to the presidency. At the time, the president *pro tempore* was Iowa Republican Albert B. Cummins, who had held that office since 1919. He had started his political career as a progressive but had grown more conservative over the years. Progressive Republicans

objected that Senator Cummins also chaired the Interstate Commerce Committee, and said they would not vote for him for president pro tempore until he relinquished his committee chairmanship in favor of progressive Senator Robert La Follette, Sr. Cummins refused and a long battle raged. Since he had already been elected in previous Congresses, Cummins held onto his post as president pro tempore, but he lost his committee chairmanship to a conservative Democrat, Ellison D. “Cotton Ed” Smith of South Carolina, when the progressives sided with Smith rather than Cummins.

After Albert Cummins lost his race for reelection in 1926, the Republican majority elected New Hampshire Senator George Moses. An outspoken leader of the “Old Guard,” Moses had belittled his progressive colleagues as “Sons of the Wild Jackass.” In the election of 1930, Republicans retained the majority in the Senate by a single vote, 48 to 47, with a Farmer Labor senator serving as an independent. Progressive Republicans set out to defeat Moses for president pro tempore. Realizing that Moses did not have the support of a majority of senators, Republican Majority Leader James Watson tried to avoid bringing the matter to a vote, but Democratic Minority Leader Joseph T. Robinson called for a vote, leading to a month-long deadlock with no candidate achieving a majority. Finally, Republican Vice President Charles Curtis ruled that the Senate could take up other pending business and that Moses could serve as president pro tempore until his successor was elected. The voters again settled the issue by defeating Senator Moses in 1932 and electing a Democratic majority, which took control of the Senate at the start of the New Deal years.

During the years of Democratic majority, which continued until 1947, several senators held the post of president pro tempore. Nevada Senator Key Pittman served in that capacity from 1933 until his death in 1940. His successor, Utah Senator William H. King, who was elected president pro tempore largely as a tribute by his colleagues, served less than two months since he had just lost his race for renomination to another term. Mississippi Senator Pat Harrison became president pro tempore in 1941, but he died in office later that year. Senator Carter Glass of Virginia succeeded him, but old age and a serious heart ailment kept him away from the Senate for several years after 1942. On January 6, 1946, Kenneth



*Kenneth McKellar was the senior Senate Democrat in 1945 when he became president pro tempore.*

McKellar of Tennessee—the most senior Democrat at the time—became president pro tempore, thus beginning another Senate tradition, that the office of president pro tempore go to the senior member of the majority party.







## 57. Charles Frederick Manderson (*Nebraska*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1891–1893

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1883, to March 3, 1895

*Party:* Republican

*Born:* Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February 9, 1837

*Died:* Aboard the steamship Cedric in the harbor of Liverpool, England, September 28, 1911

**Education:** Attended the schools and academies of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; studied law in Canton, Ohio.

**Non-Senate Career:** Charles F. Manderson was admitted to the bar in 1859 and began practicing law in Canton, Ohio. The next year, he was elected city solicitor of Canton. During the Civil War, he entered the army as a first lieutenant and rose through the grades of captain, major, lieutenant colonel, and colonel. He was brevetted brigadier general of Volunteers, United States Army, in 1865. After the war, he was the attorney of Stark County, Ohio. In 1869, he moved to Omaha, Nebraska, where he continued the practice of law. He was the city attorney of Omaha for six years and a member of the Nebraska state constitutional conventions in 1871 and 1875. After serving two terms in the U.S. Senate, Manderson was appointed general solicitor of the Burlington system of railroads west of the Missouri River. He was also vice president of the American Bar Association in 1899 and president in 1900.

**Committee Chair:** Printing (1883–1893)

**Observations:** “The presiding officer of the Senate, however, has an easy task. Things that would startle other legislative bodies—raise a disturbance in the House, perhaps—do not cause a ripple in the Senate. The most pleasant years of my life were spent as President pro tempore of the Senate. And that reminds me of the first time I was called to the chair of that body. Senator Edmunds, of Vermont, was then presiding officer. I had not been in the Senate long, when one day the late Isaac Bassett, the venerable doorkeeper of the Senate, came to me and told me that Senator Edmunds desired me to take his place in the chair. Naturally, I was astonished. I went to the rostrum and expressed my surprise that the Senator from Vermont should have called upon me. I explained that I was inexperienced and knew nothing about the rules of the Senate. I shall never forget the look Senator Edmunds gave me when he said: ‘My young friend, the best place in the world to learn the rules of the Senate is right here in the chair.’”

~ Senator Charles F. Manderson, *Washington Post*, December 8, 1908.

**Further Reading:** Manderson, Charles F. *The Twin Seven-Shooters*. New York: F. Tennyson Neely, 1902.



## 58. Isham Green Harris (*Tennessee*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1893–1895

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1877, to July 8, 1897

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Near Tullahoma, Franklin County, Tennessee, February 10, 1818

*Died:* Washington, D.C., July 8, 1897

**Education:** Attended the common schools and Winchester Academy; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** Isham Harris was admitted to the Tennessee bar in 1841 and practiced law in Paris, Henry County, Tennessee. He was elected to the state senate in 1847 and served in the U.S. House of Representatives from March 4, 1849, to March 3, 1853. He declined to be a candidate for renomination in 1852. During his House service, he was chairman of the Committee on Invalid Pensions (1851–1853). He moved to Memphis in 1853 and resumed the practice of law. In 1855, he was appointed associate justice of the Tennessee supreme court. He was elected governor of Tennessee in 1857, 1859, and 1861, and committed Tennessee to the Confederate cause. He served in the Confederate army for the last three years of the Civil War. After the Civil War, he fled first to Mexico, and then to England, but returned to Tennessee in 1867 and resumed the practice of law in Memphis.

**Committee Chair:** District of Columbia (1879–1881, 1893–1895); Epidemic Diseases (1885–1893); Private Land Claims (1895–1897)

**Observations:** “The president *pro tempore* of the Senate at that time was Isham G. Harris of Tennessee, nicknamed ‘Mandarin,’ a name suggested by his long rat-tail mustache. Mr. Harris was a popular man and an able debater, and it was his habit in the afternoon about adjournment time to drop into the Senate and indulge in a little speech-making just in the way of a good-natured scolding or spanking of his colleagues. These daily lectures gave genuine entertainment and were greatly missed after Harris left the Senate.”

~ Senate Sergeant at Arms David S. Barry in 1924, from David S. Barry, *Forty Years in Washington* (New York: Beekman Publishers, 1974), 188.

**Further Reading:** U.S. Congress. *Memorial Addresses*. 55th Cong., 2nd sess. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1898; Watters, George W. “Isham Green Harris, Civil War Governor and Senator from Tennessee, 1818–1897.” Ph.D. dissertation, Florida State University, 1977.



## 59. Matt Whitaker Ransom (*North Carolina*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1895

*Senate Service:* January 30, 1872, to March 3, 1895

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Warren County, North Carolina, October 8, 1826

*Died:* Near Garysburg, Northampton County, North Carolina, on October 8, 1904

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**Education:** Attended a private academy; graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1847; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** In 1847, Matt Ransom was admitted to the bar and practiced law in Warrenton, North Carolina. He was a presidential elector on the Whig ticket in 1852 and the attorney general of North Carolina from 1852 until 1855. Ransom served as a member of the state house of commons between 1858 and 1861. He became a peace commissioner to the Provisional Confederate Congress at Montgomery, Alabama, in 1861. During the Civil War, he served in the Confederate army, attaining the rank of major general. Following his long tenure in the U.S. Senate, Ransom served as United States Minister to Mexico from 1895 until 1897. He then retired to manage his estates in North Carolina.

**Committee Chair:** Commerce (1879–1881, 1893–1895); Railroads (1879–1881); Private Land Claims (1885–1893)

**Observations:** “The dandy of the Senate is Matt Ransom. He is always dressed in black diagonal and wears his coat closely buttoned as he moves about the chamber with stately stride, pulling down his white cuffs so that at least three inches of them may be seen below his coat sleeves. He seldom appears in the Senate without gloves. His favorite hat is a slouch, and he wears it as though it was a badge of military greatness.”

~ *New York Times*, March 28, 1886.

“But Mr. Ransom was never a social man, nor a jovial man. He did not keep open house, and his Northampton home was modest almost to plainness. He had few friends. When in Washington he lived alone, his family remaining in North Carolina, his apartments at the old Metropolitan being simple yet dignified. He rather tolerated than loved the populace, and they did not love him. He cracked no jokes with them. When in a crowd he was manifestly restless and nervous and did all the talking himself. To mingle with the people was an effort for him, but he was cordial, polite, [and] majestic in manner.”

~ Robert W. Winston, *Address at the Unveiling of the Bust of Matt W. Ransom by the North Carolina Historical Commission* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton Printing Co., 1911), 14.



## 60. William Pierce Frye (*Maine*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1896–1911

*Senate Service:* March 18, 1881, to August 8, 1911

*Party:* Republican

*Born:* Lewiston, Androscoggin County, Maine, September 2, 1830

*Died:* Lewiston, Maine, August 8, 1911

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**Education:** Attended the public schools in Lewiston; graduated from Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine, in 1850; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** William Frye was admitted to the bar in 1853 and practiced law in Rockland, Maine. He returned to Lewiston, Maine, and continued to practice law. He served in Maine's house of representatives from 1861 to 1862 and again in 1867 after serving one term as mayor of Lewiston, from 1866 to 1867. He was attorney general of Maine from 1867 to 1869 and became a member of the U.S. House of Representatives on March 4, 1871, serving until March 17, 1881.

**Committee Chair:** Rules (1881–1887); Commerce (1887–1893, 1895–1911)

**Observations:** “In 1896, when the Republicans obtained command of the Senate during the Presidency of President [Grover] Cleveland, Senator Frye was elected President pro tem, and it happened twice during his long term of office, through the death of Vice President [Garret A.] Hobart and the assassination of President [William] McKinley, that he became the regular presiding officer. His rule was noted for its scrupulous fairness, and it was with the greatest reluctance that his colleagues heard last April that ill-health compelled him to resign. However, his successor has never been appointed, and in consequence retained his office to the last.”

~ *New York Times* obituary, April 9, 1911.

**Further Reading:** U.S. Congress. *Memorial Addresses*. 62nd Cong., 3rd sess. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1913.



## 61. Augustus Octavius Bacon (*Georgia*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1911, 1912, 1913

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1895, to February 14, 1914

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Bryan County, Georgia, October 20, 1839

*Died:* Washington, D.C., February 14, 1914

**Education:** Attended the common schools in Liberty County and Troup County, Georgia; graduated from the literary department of the University of Georgia at Athens in 1859 and from its law department in 1860.

**Non-Senate Career:** Admitted to the bar in 1860, Augustus O. Bacon practiced law in Atlanta, Georgia. He served in the Confederate army during the Civil War and participated in the campaigns of 1861 and 1862 as adjutant of the Ninth Georgia Regiment in the Army of Northern Virginia. He was commissioned captain in the Provisional Army of the Confederacy and assigned to general staff duty. He became a member of the state house of representatives in 1871 and remained until 1886, serving as speaker pro tempore for two terms and as speaker eight years. He was also president of the Democratic state convention in 1880.

**Committee Chair:** Engrossed Bills (1907–1911); Private Land Claims (1909–1913); Foreign Relations (1913–1914)

**Observations:** “One of the growing demands of our modern conditions is the election of United States senators by the people. In the demand for such a constitutional change many obstacles are met with, and it will be a long time before success in that line is achieved, but this morning, by the unanimous vote of the people of Georgia, cast in their little district voting places from the mountains to the sea, Hon. Augustus Bacon is presented to the people of the United

States as our chosen senator. His past record in the senate was before the people, in all of its parts. His personal industry and fidelity were brought under full scrutiny, and without the expenditure of a dollar, without the delivery of a single address, without the loss of one moment of time on his part, his people have selected him to represent them for another six years in the chief body of the land. In this way Senator Bacon will stand in that august body, which has been graced by Calhoun, Webster and Clay, as the personal representatives of the new plan by which [Matthew] Quaylism and [William] Clarkism can be rendered impossible, and Georgia will have the credit of having inaugurated this change in its most effective form.”

~ *Atlanta Constitution* editorial on the state primary that selected Augustus Bacon for another term, May 16, 1900.

**Further Reading:** Steelman, Lola Carr. “The Public Career of Augustus Bacon.” Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1950; U.S. Congress. *Memorial Addresses*. 63rd Cong., 3rd sess. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1915.



## 62. Charles Curtis (*Kansas*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1911

*Senate Service:* January 29, 1907, to March 3, 1913; March 4, 1915, to March 3, 1929

*Party:* Republican

*Born:* Topeka, Kansas, January 25, 1860

*Died:* Washington, D.C., February 8, 1936

**Education:** Attended the common schools; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** Charles Curtis was admitted to the Kansas bar in 1881 and practiced law in Topeka. He was prosecuting attorney of Shawnee County from 1885 to 1889 and a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from March 4, 1893, until January 28, 1907, when he became a U.S. senator. During his House service, he was chairman of the House Committee on Expenditures in the Department of the Interior (1895–1903). In 1928, he was elected vice president of the United States on the Republican ticket headed by Herbert Hoover, was inaugurated on March 4, 1929, and served until March 3, 1933. He was an unsuccessful candidate for reelection to the vice presidency in 1932 and resumed the practice of law in Washington, D.C.

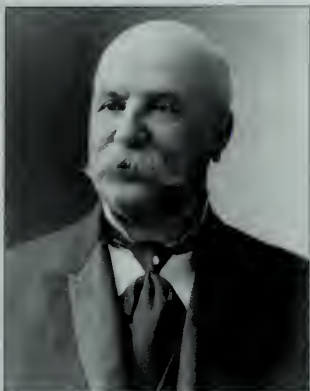
**Senate Offices:** Republican Conference chairman (1924–1929); Republican whip (1915–1924); majority leader (1925–1929); vice president (1929–1933)

**Committee Chair:** Indian Depredations (1905–11); Coast Defenses (1911–13)

**Observations:** “While Mr. Curtis and I often disagreed on legislative matters, yet in all my acquaintance I have never known him to violate his word or to fail to carry out in good faith any agreement that he had made. In our joint legislative experience, especially while he was the leader of his party in the Senate, I had many occasions to reach an agreement with him of which there was no evidence except his word and, without exception, he always carried out his agreements in good faith and kept his word inviolate.”

~ Senator George W. Norris in the *Washington Star*, February 8, 1936.

**Further Reading:** Unrau, William E. *Mixed Bloods and Tribal Dissolution: Charles Curtis and the Quest for Indian Identity*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1989; Schlup, Leonard. “Charles Curtis: The Vice-President from Kansas.” *Manuscripts* 35 (Summer 1983): 183–201.



## 63. Jacob Harold Gallinger (*New Hampshire*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1912, 1913

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1891, to August 17, 1918

*Party:* Republican

*Born:* Cornwall, Ontario, Canada, March 28, 1837

*Died:* Franklin, New Hampshire, August 17, 1918

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**Education:** Attended the common schools and completed an academic course; studied medicine and graduated from the Cincinnati (Ohio) Medical Institute in 1858; studied abroad for two years.

**Non-Senate Career:** At the age of 12, Jacob Gallinger was apprenticed to a printer. He practiced this trade for several years before turning his attention to medicine. Gallinger practiced medicine and surgery in Concord, New Hampshire. He was a member of the state house of representatives from 1872 to 1873, and again in 1891. He served as a member of the state constitutional convention in 1876 and was a member of the state senate from 1878 to 1880. Gallinger was the surgeon general of New Hampshire, with the rank of brigadier general, from 1879 to 1880. He served two terms in the U.S. House of Representatives, from March 4, 1885, to March 3, 1889, and was chairman of the Merchant Marine Commission from 1904 until 1905.

**Senate Offices:** Republican Conference chairman (1913–1918)

**Committee Chair:** Transportation Routes to the Seaboard (1891–1893); Pensions (1895–1903); District of Columbia (1901–1911)

**Observations:** “He was a conservative in most of his notions, narrow in some. He was an ancient enemy of civil service reform. He didn’t believe that railroads were an abomination and a curse. He held to the old Republican gospel of ship subsidies. Firm was his faith in a protective tariff, heaven-sent, heaven-high. He was thoroughly

old school, even if, as a wily politician, he kindly assented to venerable woman suffrage. He was long a faithful friend of fat River and Harbor bills, but he brought himself to filibuster against one. He was ‘solid for’ pensions. An ally of Senator [Nelson] Aldrich and Speaker [Joseph] Cannon, he was viewed with alarm by the Progressives and the [Robert] La Follettians, not merely as an obstructor of their political virtue, but on account of his attachment to party discipline, and, in the Senate, his knowledge of form and precedent, his devotion to parliamentary law, his unpleasant habit of knowing what he was about.”

~ *New York Times* editorial, August 18, 1918.

**Further Reading:** Schlup, Leonard. “Consistent Conservative: Jacob Harold Gallinger and the Presidential Campaign of 1912 in New Hampshire.” *International Review of History and Political Science* 21 (August 1984): 49–57; U.S. Congress. *Memorial Services for Jacob Harold Gallinger*. 65th Cong., 3rd sess. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1919.



## 64. Frank Bosworth Brandegee (*Connecticut*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1912

*Senate Service:* May 10, 1905, to October 14, 1924

*Party:* Republican

*Born:* New London, Connecticut, July 8, 1864

*Died:* Washington, D.C., October 14, 1924

**Education:** Attended the common schools; graduated from Yale College in 1885; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** Frank Brandegee was admitted to the bar in 1888 and practiced law in New London, Connecticut. He was elected to the state house of representatives in 1888, and then served as the corporation counsel of New London from 1889 to 1893, and again from 1894 to 1897, when he resigned. After serving again in the state house of representatives, where he was chosen as speaker in 1899, he was again elected as the corporation counsel of New London and served from 1901 to 1902. In 1904, he was chairman of the Republican state convention. He became a member of the U.S. House of Representatives on November 4, 1902, and served until May 10, 1905.

**Committee Chair:** Forest Reservations and Game Protection (1905–1911); Interoceanic Canals (1911–1913); Panama (1911–1913); Pacific Railroads (1913–1919); Library (1919–1923); Judiciary (1923–1924)

**Observations:** “If Senator Brandegee had a fault as a public character, it was his excessive modesty, his shrinking from undue notoriety. He liked praise, just as any other mortal, but only when he felt it warranted. He

could not see the propriety of self-advertising. He could not invoke the services of a publicity man. He spoke in the Senate only when he thought there was need for his caution or advice. He never made speeches like so many of our public men purely for home consumption. He did not seek the limelight. Because his name did not appear often in the public prints many no doubt were misled to believe that he was not active in the performance of his duties. As a matter of fact, no senator especially in recent years had such heavy burdens thrown upon him by reason of his many committee memberships. . . . He was a plain spoken man with much dry wit, with a tendency toward cynicism. He was not given to flowery language, and retained to the end in his speech and conversation many New England characteristic phrases.”

~ *New London, Connecticut, Evening Day*, October 15, 1924

**Further Reading:** Janick, Herbert. “Senator Frank B. Brandegee and the Election of 1920.” *Historian* 35 (May 1973): 434–51; U.S. Congress. *Memorial Addresses*. 68th Cong., 1st sess. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1925.





## 65. Henry Cabot Lodge (*Massachusetts*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1912

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1893, to November 9, 1924

*Party:* Republican

*Born:* Boston, Massachusetts, May 12, 1850

*Died:* Cambridge, Massachusetts, November 9, 1924

**Education:** Attended a private school; graduated from Harvard University in 1871; graduated from the Harvard Law School in 1874; earned one of the first Ph.D. degrees in history and government granted by Harvard University in 1876.

**Non-Senate Career:** From 1873 until 1876, Henry Cabot Lodge worked as an editor of the *North American Review*. He was admitted to the bar in 1875 and was a lecturer on American history at Harvard University from 1876 until 1879. He entered politics and served as a member of the state house of representatives from 1880 until 1881. He was the author of many historical, biographical, and political works. Lodge was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and served from March 4, 1887, until March 3, 1893, when he resigned in order to serve in the U.S. Senate. In 1903, he was a member of the Alaskan Boundary Tribunal, and from 1907 to 1910, he was a member of the United States Immigration Commission. Lodge served as overseer of Harvard University from 1911 until 1924 and represented the United States as a member of the Conference on Limitation of Armament in 1921.

**Senate Offices:** Republican Conference chairman (1918–1924)

**Committee Chair:** Immigration (1895–1913); Printing (1897–1899); Philippines (1899–1911); Private Land Claims (1913–1919); Foreign Relations (1919–1924)

**Observations:** “As a statesman, he is one of the leaders in the nation today; as a writer, scholar, and student, he is notable. The Senate of the United States welcomes him to its counsel as a keen debater, a man of correct judgment, a committee worker of skill and ardor, and a leader of sagacity and virtue. . . . He is a man approachable, and yet not easy to approach. None would be ill-mannered with the Senator, because his splendid bearing, his nobly set head, and the achievement which shines from his eyes compel respect and courtesy. Lodge is tall and slight; he dresses carefully and in the mode, yet with a quiet elegance and correctness that few can effectually attain. His eyes are full of humor, deep and bright, and there is about him an air of elegance and ease which is difficult to set down in words. When he rises in the Senate, he is respectfully heard. His set speeches are classic; his occasional talks are full of authority, yet they are courteous and broad. In every sense but the objectionable, Henry Cabot Lodge instantly suggests a superior man, a member of a gentility which is alone found among the able and the great of this world.”

~ Orlando Oscar Stealey, *130 Pen Pictures of Live Men* (Washington, D.C.: Publishers Printing Company [New York], 1910), 267–68.

**Further Reading:** Garraty, John A. *Henry Cabot Lodge: A Biography*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953; Lodge, Henry Cabot. *The Senate of the United States, and Other Essays and Addresses Historical and Literary*. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1925.



## 66. James Paul Clarke (*Arkansas*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1913–1916

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1903, to October 1, 1916

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Yazoo City, Yazoo County, Mississippi, August 18, 1854

*Died:* Little Rock, Arkansas, October 1, 1916

**Education:** Attended the public schools and Professor Tutwilder’s Academy, Greenbrier, Alabama; graduated from the law department of the University of Virginia at Charlottesville in 1878.

**Non-Senate Career:** James Clarke moved to Helena, Arkansas, in 1879, was admitted to the bar, and established a law practice. He was elected to the state house of representatives in 1886, where he served until 1888, when he was elected to the state senate. He represented Helena in the state senate until 1892, serving as president in 1891 and ex officio lieutenant governor. He was elected attorney general of Arkansas in 1892 and served until 1894, when he declined to be a candidate for renomination. He was governor of Arkansas from 1895 to 1896. He ran for the U.S. Senate in 1896 but lost and for the next six years, resumed his law practice in Little Rock.

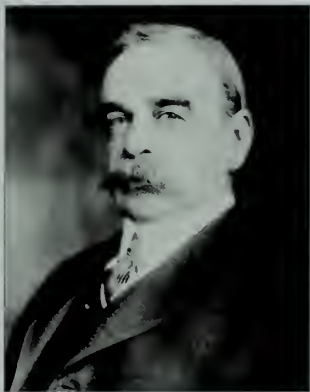
**Committee Chair:** Disposition of Useless Executive Papers (1909–1913); Commerce (1913–1916)

**Observations:** “What we mean by calling a man a character I hardly know. Perhaps we intend to imply that he is different from ourselves and different from the large body of mankind. If that be true then Senator

James P. Clarke was a character. There was no finer lawyer in the Senate of the United States. He knew great principles, and he had the ability to present his ideas with great clarity. He was the only man in all my experience who had the newspaper fraternity scared. He would not see or talk to a reporter, and it was only a new man in Washington who dared to approach him with the idea of obtaining either information or his views on public questions. He was a real independent and a real believer in representative government. He did not believe that his constituents had a right to annoy him with suggestions or requests for information. The story is told, and upon good authority, that when he was making his canvass for re-election some man in the audience arose and said: ‘Senator, why didn’t you answer the letter I wrote you?’ His reply was: ‘I have already answered too many fool letters that have been sent to me from Arkansas, and when I am re-elected I do not propose to waste any time answering every fool who concludes to write me a letter.’”

~ Vice President Thomas R. Marshall, from his memoirs, quoted in the *Washington Post*, September 30, 1925.

**Further Reading:** U.S. Congress. *Memorial Addresses*. 64th Cong., 2nd sess. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1917.



## 67. Willard Saulsbury, Jr. (*Delaware*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1916–1919

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1913, to March 3, 1919

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Georgetown, Sussex County, Delaware, April 17, 1861

*Died:* Wilmington, Delaware, February 20, 1927

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**Education:** Attended private schools and the University of Virginia at Charlottesville; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** Willard Saulsbury, Jr., was admitted to the bar in 1882 and practiced law in Wilmington, Delaware, and Washington, D.C. He was the president of the New Castle Bar Association and chairman of the board of censors. Saulsbury was successful in banking and sundry business organizations and was a director of the Equitable Trust Company and the Union National Bank. He was a member of the Democratic National Committee from 1908 until 1920. Following his Senate service, he served on the advisory committee of the Conference on Limitation of Armaments in Washington, D.C., in 1921 and 1922, and was a member of the Pan American Conference in Santiago, Chile, in 1923.

**Committee Chair:** Coast and Insular Survey (1913–1919); Pacific Inlands and Puerto Rico (1917–1919)

**Observations:** “Senator Willard Saulsbury has been selected by the Democratic caucus to be President pro tempore of the Senate. . . . Senator Saulsbury for many years has been active in Democratic national and State politics, and is the member of the Democratic national committee from his State. He was one of the moving spirits of the Chicago headquarters, and in great degree party success in the Western States in the recent campaign was due to his initiative and executive ability. His term expires in two years, and as Delaware is generally a Republican State in national elections, his colleagues believed that the prestige of this office would be of political value in Delaware. In addition to this, Mr. Saulsbury is a skilled parliamentarian and one of the most popular members of the Senate, irrespective of political affiliations.”

~ *Washington Post*, December 14, 1916.

**Further Reading:** Franseth, Gregory S., L. Rebecca Johnson Melvin, and Shiela Pardee. “The End of an Era in Delaware: The Practical Politics of Willard Saulsbury, Jr.” *Collections* 11 (2003): 1–27.



## 68. Albert Baird Cummins (*Iowa*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1919–1925

*Senate Service:* November 24, 1908, to July 30, 1926

*Party:* Republican

*Born:* Near Carmichaels, Greene County, Pennsylvania, February 15, 1850

*Died:* Des Moines, Iowa, July 30, 1926

**Education:** Attended the public schools and a preparatory academy; graduated from Waynesburg (Pennsylvania) College in 1869; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** Albert Cummins moved to Iowa in 1869 and briefly worked as a carpenter while clerking in the office of the recorder of Clayton County. He moved in 1871 to Allen County, Indiana, where he became deputy county surveyor and engaged in railroad building. He was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1875 and practiced law in Chicago. He returned in 1878 to Des Moines, Iowa, where he continued the practice of law. He became a member of the state house of representatives in 1888, serving until 1890, and was an unsuccessful candidate for election to the United States Senate in 1894 and 1900. He was a member of the Republican National Committee from 1896 to 1900 and served as governor of Iowa from 1902 until 1908, when he won election to the U.S. Senate.

**Committee Chair:** Civil Service and Retrenchment (1909–1913); Mississippi River and its Tributaries (1913–1919); Interstate Commerce (1919–1923); Judiciary (1923–1926)

**Observations:** “Suave, skillful, faultless in designing, in exposition faultless; never bitter, never once losing control; stocked with merciless information that crushed all attempts to befog the issues, Cummins

worked out a pattern of constructive statesmanship that amazed the close watchers of governmental affairs in Washington. They realized that here was a Senator with the abilities for leadership possessed by [Senator Nelson] Aldrich himself; with qualities of statesmanship that [Senator Willard] Saulsbury might have envied. And his familiarity with the topics he discussed, his ready mastery of data, and his smooth and masterly manners of presentation made Cummins one of the three really great figures of twentieth-century Congressional record. . . . There is much in the personal appearance of Cummins to lend him grace as a public character. He is something above average height, with kindling eyes, in which courtesy and gentility vie with intelligence for domination. His face is finely featured; his head is shapely, and it bears hair to lend it beauty. His frame is easy and graceful.”

~ Orlando Oscar Stealey, *130 Pen Pictures of Live Men* (Washington, D.C.: Publishers Printing Company [New York], 1910), 117.

**Further Reading:** Bray, Thomas James. *The Rebirth of Freedom*. Indianola, IA: Record Tribune Press, 1957; Margulies, Herbert F. “Senate Moderates in the League of Nations Battle: The Case of Albert B. Cummins.” *Annals of Iowa* 50 (Spring 1990): 333–58.



## 69. George Higgins Moses (*New Hampshire*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1925–1933

*Senate Service:* November 6, 1918, to March 3, 1933

*Party:* Republican

*Born:* Lubec, Washington County, Maine, February 9, 1869

*Died:* Concord, New Hampshire, December 20, 1944

**Education:** Attended the public schools of Eastport, Maine, and Franklin, New Hampshire; graduated from Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter, New Hampshire, in 1887 and from Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire, in 1890.

**Non-Senate Career:** George H. Moses worked as the private secretary to the governor of New Hampshire from 1889 until 1891. He began working as a reporter for the *Concord Evening Monitor* in 1890 and became a news editor and then chief editor, a position he held for 20 years. Moses was a member and secretary of the New Hampshire Forestry Commission from 1893 until 1907, and served as the United States minister to Greece and Montenegro from 1909 until 1912. When his tenure in the U.S. Senate ended in 1933, he engaged in literary work in Concord, New Hampshire.

**Committee Chair:** Printing (1919–1925); Post Office and Post Roads (1925–1929); Rules (1929–1933)

**Observations:** “My own boss, George Moses, a man of many contradictory traits, was in many respects the most brilliant man who ever represented New Hampshire, and he merits more than passing attention. . . . Moses was truly a master of words. Fresh out of college, he

began as a reporter for the *Concord Monitor*, and years later became its owner and publisher. With his natural aptitude of languages and his years of writing, he acquired a vocabulary more varied and complete than any person I have ever known. . . . He spoke as he wrote, with an imagination that added glitter to many dry subjects. . . . The world never saw, nor does history record, the human, compassionate side of George Moses. This was his fault. To the world he gave the impression of a cynical, sarcastic, brilliant individual with a biting tongue. In later years, when I was more mature, I came to realize that he enjoyed that role—indeed, that he almost reveled in it. His wit was sharp as a rapier and he could not resist uttering a witticism, no matter how cutting.”

~ Senator Norris Cotton, *In the Senate* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1978), 4–5.

**Further Reading:** Gallagher, Edward J. *George H. Moses: A Profile*. Laconia, NH: Citizen Publishing House, 1975; Symonds, Merrill A. “George Higgins Moses of New Hampshire—The Man and the Era.” Ph.D. dissertation. Clark University, 1955.



## 70. Key Pittman (*Nevada*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1933–1940

*Senate Service:* January 29, 1913, to November 10, 1940

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Vicksburg, Warren County, Mississippi, September 12, 1872

*Died:* Reno, Nevada, November 10, 1940

**Education:** Educated by private tutors and at the Southwestern Presbyterian University, Clarksville, Tennessee; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** Key Pittman was admitted to the bar in 1892 and practiced law in Seattle, Washington. He joined in the gold rush to Klondike, Alaska, in 1897 and worked as a miner until 1901. He practiced law in Alaska and then moved to the silver boom-town of Tonopah, Nevada, in 1902 and continued to practice law. He was appointed to represent the state of Nevada at the St. Louis Exposition, the Lewis and Clark Exposition, and the irrigation congress. He was an unsuccessful Democratic candidate for election to the U.S. Senate in 1910, but won election in 1913.

**Committee Chair:** Territories (1913–1919); Industrial Expositions (1925–1927); Foreign Relations (1933–1940)

**Observations:** “Pittman maintains better order in the Senate than any other of its presiding officers. Ruling debate in the Senate is no child’s play. The officer in the chair must recognize every Senator immediately. He must have parliamentary rules at his finger tips. He must be quick. He can make no mistakes. Pittman fulfills all of these requirements.”

~ Columnist Drew Pearson, 1937, in Betty Glad, *Key Pittman: The Tragedy of a Senate Insider* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 205–6.

**Further Reading:** Israel, Fred. *Nevada’s Key Pittman*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963.



## 71. William Henry King (*Utah*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1940–1941

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1917, to January 3, 1941

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Fillmore, Millard County, Utah, June 3, 1863

*Died:* Salt Lake City, Utah, November 27, 1949

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**Education:** Attended the public schools, Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, and the University of Utah at Salt Lake City; graduated from the law department of the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor.

**Non-Senate Career:** Between 1880 and 1883, William H. King was a missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Great Britain. He was elected to various offices in the city of Fillmore and in Millard County, Utah, and was a member of the territorial legislature. He was admitted to the bar in 1890 and practiced law in Utah and in Washington, D.C. King was a member of the territorial council in 1891, serving as its president. He then became an associate justice of the Utah supreme court, serving from 1894 until 1896. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from March 4, 1897, until March 3, 1899, and from April 2, 1900, until March 3, 1901. He was an unsuccessful candidate for reelection to the House in 1900 and 1902. Following his U.S. Senate service, he practiced law in Washington, D.C., until April 1947, when he returned to Salt Lake City, Utah.

**Committee Chair:** Expenditures in the Post Office Department (1917–1919); District of Columbia (1933–1941)

**Observations:** “As an ardent Jeffersonian Democrat all his life, Senator King nevertheless took an independent stand in considering legislation. Often he voted against the leaders of his party in order to follow his own convictions. Partly for that reason his four terms in the Senate did not give him a position of outstanding leadership in the councils of his party. . . . His voice often ran through the Senate in opposition to centralization of power in the Federal Government. As a critic, he was a formidable influence, and if his course sometimes seemed to be erratic, it nevertheless reflected a sincerity of convictions—the basis on which all representative government must rest.”

~ *Washington Post* editorial, November 29, 1949.

**Further Reading:** Hauptman, Laurence M. “Utah Anti-Imperialist: Senator William H. King and Haiti, 1921–1934.” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 41 (Spring 1973): 116–27; Libby, Justin H. “Senators King and Thomas and the Continuing War with Japan.” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 42 (Fall 1974): 370–80.



## 72. Byron Patton (Pat) Harrison (*Mississippi*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1941

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1919, to June 22, 1941

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Crystal Springs, Copiah County, Mississippi, August 29, 1881

*Died:* Washington, D.C., June 22, 1941

**Education:** Attended the public schools; briefly attended the University of Mississippi and the University of Louisiana at Baton Rouge; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** Pat Harrison taught school at Leakesville, Mississippi, before being admitted to the bar in 1902. He began practicing law in Leakesville and became district attorney for the second district of Mississippi in 1906, serving until 1910, when he resigned. He moved to Gulfport, Mississippi, in 1908 and represented Gulfport in the U.S. House of Representatives from March 4, 1911, until March 4, 1919, when he began his tenure in the U.S. Senate.

**Committee Chair:** Finance (1933–1941)

**Observations:** “He was always willing to play the role of ‘pinch hitter’ when legislation became ensnarled. He liked the baseball term, for it reminded him of his early days when he played small league baseball on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. . . . He built a reputation as one of the ablest give-and-take debaters. When the Republicans were in power he was famous for his satirical attacks on that party. Republicans dubbed him the ‘Democratic Gadfly.’ Yet his irony in debate never left scars and he had many friends among the Republicans. . . . His work as floor leader for a measure was always interesting to watch. He did little speech-making. Most of the time he traded, pacified, flattered. Reporters liked to watch the tall, stooped Harrison ambling about on the floor or heading for the Senate cloakroom to nurse along a doubtful member—ever on the move, buttonholing one Senator, getting reports from another.”

~ *Washington Post*, June 23, 1941.

**Further Reading:** Coker, William S., “Pat Harrison—Strategy for Victory.” *Journal of Mississippi History* 28 (November 1966): 267–85; Swain, Martha H. *Pat Harrison: The New Deal Years*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1978.





## 73. Carter Glass (*Virginia*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1941–1945

*Senate Service:* February 2, 1920, to May 28, 1946

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Lynchburg, Campbell County, Virginia, January 4, 1858

*Died:* Washington, D.C., May 28, 1946

***Education:*** Attended private and public schools.

***Non-Senate Career:*** Carter Glass was a newspaper reporter, editor, and owner. In 1899, he became a member of the Virginia state senate, where he served until 1903. Glass was also a delegate to the state constitutional convention in 1901. He was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and served from November 4, 1902, until December 16, 1918. In the House, he was chairman of the Committee on Banking and Currency from 1913 until 1918. He resigned his House seat to serve as secretary of the treasury under President Wilson. Glass was a member of the Democratic National Committee between 1916 and 1928.

***Committee Chair:*** Expenditures in the Interior Department (1919–1921); Appropriations (1933–1946)

***Observations:*** “Among the keenest financial minds to hold both positions [as president pro tempore and chairman of the Appropriations Committee] was Carter Glass of Virginia. Already famous when he

came to the Senate in 1920 as the father of the Federal Reserve System and President Wilson’s Secretary of the Treasury, the little Senator from Virginia more than made up for his size by his fighting nature. Many have compared him with the bantam cocks he liked to watch in combat. Carter Glass would orate from the center aisle, his voice had a rasping tremor, and his sharp face always twisted around to let the words come out of one corner of his mouth. Woodrow Wilson, marveling at Glass’s accomplishments once remarked, “Think of what Carter could do if he talked out of both sides of his mouth!”

~ Richard Langham Reidel, *Halls of the Mighty: My 47 Years at the Senate* (Washington, D.C.: R. B. Luce, 1969), 209–10.

***Further Reading:*** Koeniger, Alfred C. “‘Unreconstructed Rebel’: The Political Thought and Senate Career of Carter Glass, 1929–1936.” Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1980; Lyle, John O. “The United States Senate Career of Carter Glass, 1920–1933.” Ph.D. dissertation, University of South Carolina, 1974.



## 74. Kenneth Douglas McKellar (*Tennessee*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1945–1947, 1949–1953

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1917, to January 3, 1953

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Richmond, Dallas County, Alabama, January 29, 1869

*Died:* Memphis, Tennessee, October 25, 1957

**Education:** Received private instruction from his parents and his sister; graduated from the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa in 1891 and from its law department in 1892.

**Non-Senate Career:** Kenneth McKellar moved to Memphis, Tennessee, in 1892 and was admitted to the bar that same year. He practiced law in Memphis and was a presidential elector on the Democratic ticket in 1904. He was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1911 and served from December 4, 1911, to March 4, 1917.

**Committee Chair:** Civil Service and Retrenchment (1917–1919); Post Office and Post Roads (1933–1947); Appropriations (1945–1953)

**Observations:** “[Columnist] Drew Pearson tangled with McKellar today. . . . Pearson referred to the Senator’s temper, retelling the old tale about the time he drew a knife on a fellow Senator and had to be virtually disarmed before he calmed down; he then went on into his patronage, his power as acting chairman of Appropriations, his feud with TVA. Old Mack put on a pow’ful good show in reply. He wanted to ask his fellow Senators—he wanted to tell them—if any of the statements of this low-down, lying, contemptible scoundrel were true. If any Senator ever heard of him drawing a knife on anybody, he wanted

him to get up and tell him about it. . . . If any Senator ever heard of him using Appropriations to kill off anybody’s pet project as a means of retaliation, he wanted him to get up and tell him about it. And as for patronage! Why! That was the most contemptible, sneaking, miserable, low-down lie of all the lies by this egregious ass. He wanted his fellow Senators to tell him—he challenged any Senator—he would let them pass the verdict on him as to whether he was any of the things this sneaking skunk had said. His voice roared one moment and sank to a grimly amused conversational tone the next. His right arm flailed the air and his forelock fell across his sleepy eye. He did not get a case of the weepy sniffles, as he is sometimes wont to do, but aside from that he put on quite a complete exhibit of the McKellar repertoire. His fellow Senators, who regard him with a combination of affection, fear, and amusement, sat in amused or impassive silence and in effect assented to all his statements by so doing.”

~ Allen Drury, *A Senate Journal* (New York, Da Capo Press, 1972), 148.

**Further Reading:** McKellar, Kenneth. *Tennessee Senators As Seen By One of Their Successors*. Kingsport, Tenn.: Southern Publishers, 1942; Pope, Robert Dean. “Senatorial Baron: The Long Political Career of Kenneth C. McKellar.” Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1975.

# The Modern Era, 1947–present

**T**he death of President Franklin D. Roosevelt on April 12, 1945, sent Vice President Harry S. Truman to the White House, only months into Roosevelt's fourth term. Truman would serve for three and a half years without a vice president, until the 1948 election. Under the law of presidential succession, the next in line to the presidency was Secretary of State Edward Stettinius, Jr., who had not held an elective office. Truman believed it was wrong for anyone to step into the presidency who had never been elected by a vote of the people. In the short run, he solved this dilemma by replacing Stettinius with former Senator James F. Byrnes. In the long run, he asked Congress to revise the order of succession to place the Speaker of the House and president pro tempore of the Senate ahead of the cabinet members in line of succession to the presidency.

Previously, when the Speaker and president pro tempore had stood in the line of succession, the president pro tempore came first, based on the concept of the president pro tempore as the stand-in for the vice president. Truman thought the Speaker of the House, the chosen leader of the “elected representatives of the people,” ought to be placed first. (Since the 1913 ratification of the Constitution's 17th Amendment, providing for direct popular election of senators, the same argument could be made on behalf of the president pro tempore.) Personalities likely influenced his thinking as well. In 1945, 76-year-old Senator Kenneth McKellar of Tennessee served as president pro tempore. The cantankerous McKellar had dissented from much of Roosevelt's and Truman's social welfare programs. By contrast, 63-year-old House Speaker Sam Rayburn,

a staunch supporter of the administration, better fit Truman's image of a successor. An alternative to McKellar might have been the Senate majority leader, a post then held by Kentucky Senator Alben Barkley. Since the 1886 act of succession, the Senate had also established the positions of majority and minority leaders, and the Senate majority leader had evolved into a role that was the equivalent of Speaker—someone who represented both his party and the Senate. The majority leader, however, was not a constitutional officer like the president pro tempore.

Truman's proposed change in presidential succession passed the House of Representatives but stalled in the Senate during the 79th Congress (1945–1947). After Republicans won control of the 80th Congress (1947–1949), Truman resubmitted the idea, which was now seen as an extraordinary gesture for the president of the United States to recommend a change in the system that could elevate a leader of the opposition party to



*President pro tempore Arthur Vandenberg became second in the line of presidential succession after the new Presidential Succession Act became law in 1947.*

succeed him. At the time, Michigan Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg served as president pro tempore. Vandenberg also chaired the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and as a principal architect of the bipartisan foreign policy of the early Cold War had earned respect from both sides of the aisle. Congressional Republicans were therefore receptive to placing Vandenberg and House Speaker Joseph Martin in the line of succession. The Senate passed the bill on June 27 by a vote of 50 to 35, with Republicans voting in favor and Democrats opposed. The House followed on July 10, and Truman signed it into law on July 18.

The 1940s also marked a change in the functioning of the vice presidency and, thus, the president pro tempore. Both Vice Presidents Henry Wallace and Alben Barkley spent much time traveling across the country and around the world on missions for the president, and were frequently absent from the Senate. In the 1950s, Vice President Richard Nixon spent only about half his time at the Senate, choosing instead to focus his duties in the executive branch. In 1961, Lyndon Johnson became the first vice president to have an office near the White House—a suite in the Old Executive Office Building. Walter Mondale, who served from 1977 to 1981, became the first vice president to occupy an office in the West Wing. As vice presidents became less a part of the legislative branch and more an assistant president, the presidents pro tempore spent more time presiding, or assigning others to preside in their absence.

Aided by the majority party floor staff during these years, the president pro tempore often assigned junior senators to preside over the Senate as acting presidents pro tempore, each taking an hour at a time in rotating order. Given the senators' crowded schedules, frequent travel, and last-minute cancellations, this process added to the president pro tempore's burden of duties. Freshmen senators of the majority party were called upon to spend many hours as presiding officer, justified as a means of learning the Senate's parliamentary procedure. It was easier for the president pro tempore to find senators to preside when there was a large class of freshmen. When elections did not produce large freshmen classes, the pool of potential presiding officers dwindled. The election of 1966, for example, produced only two new majority senators, which meant

that preceding freshmen senators, who normally would have seen the bulk of their presiding duties assumed by the incoming freshmen, were still being called upon to carry the load. Majority leader Mike Mansfield appealed to all Democratic senators, including senior members, to take turns presiding.

In June of 1967, after freshman Senator Ernest F. Hollings of South Carolina had completed 100 hours presiding over the Senate in a single session, Senator Mansfield presented him with the first "Golden Gavel" award, beginning another Senate tradition. Throughout 1967, Senator Hollings spent 180 hours and 7 minutes presiding, while the other freshman Democrat, William Spong of Virginia, spent 114 hours and 47 minutes. Next in the amount of time spent in the chair was a more senior senator—Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia—who clocked 95 hours and 35 minutes.

Arranging for senators to preside over the Senate became such a persistent problem that the majority party sought cooperation from the minority. In 1969, Senate Republicans agreed to fill the chair for a minimum of two hours each day, from three to five in the afternoon. For seven years this arrangement facilitated matters, until it spectacularly crashed on July 18, 1975. The maverick Republican Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina, while presiding, ignored the majority leader, who was seeking recognition. Instead, Helms called on a senator who was trying to delay action on a bill. This move infuriated Senator Mansfield, who pointed out that he had "asked the Senator from North Carolina, sitting in that Chair, to recognize me, as the majority leader, which is the custom in this body." Senator Mansfield was referring to the leadership's "right of first recognition." As a result of this breach of comity, from then on only majority party senators would preside.

When Senator Robert C. Byrd assumed the post in 1989, he presided long enough to become the first president pro tempore to receive the Golden Gavel award. But for the most part, recent presidents pro tempore have chosen only to preside at the opening of the day's proceedings or in



*The Golden Gavel award was created in 1967 to honor senators who presided over the Senate for 100 hours or more in a single session.*

moments of complex parliamentary wrangling, when the floor leadership seeks their procedural expertise. Presidents pro tempore have a variety of other functions to perform, including chairing a major Senate committee. When the Democrats have held the majority, they made the president pro tempore an ex officio member of their party's conference, policy committee, and steering committee, while Republican presidents pro tempore have served as ex officio members of their policy committee. Various laws have assigned authority to the presidents pro tempore to make appointments to an assortment of national commissions, usually with the advice of the majority leader, or the minority leader for minority appointments. Together with the Speaker of the House, the president pro tempore also appoints the director of the Congressional Budget Office. In the absence of the vice president, the president pro tempore may administer all oaths required by the Constitution, may sign legislation, and may preside with the Speaker of the House over joint sessions or joint meetings. The president pro tempore also works closely with the secretary of the Senate and the sergeant at arms to direct the enforcement of the rules governing the Capitol and the Senate office buildings.

After the expansion of the Capitol Building in 1962, two rooms on the east front of the Capitol were reserved for the use of the president pro tempore. (The space has since shifted to different locations.) In addition to office space, additional staff, and higher salary, presidents pro tempore have the use of an official car and driver. While Senator Warren G. Magnuson, a Democrat from Washington, served as president pro tempore in 1979, the office adopted the first official seal of the president pro tempore, featuring the gavel used by presiding officers in the Senate Chamber. Commenting on the varied responsibilities of the office, Senator Magnuson's staff assistant, Warren Featherstone Reid, observed that the occupant of the office "makes more or less out of it," with its purely legal powers being mostly in reserve, for use when necessary.

Since Senate tradition now dictates that the office go to the most senior member of the majority party, it has become usual for presidents pro tempore to be in their 70s, 80s, and 90s. At different times, the age or infirmity of the president pro tempore has spurred the creation of several new positions. When the Senate entered into a lengthy debate on civil rights legislation in 1964, it created the office

of permanent acting president pro tempore, to assist President pro tempore Carl Hayden, an 86-year-old Arizona Democrat. Majority leader Mike Mansfield expressed concern over whether Senator Hayden still had the stamina to preside during the expected filibuster, which could last for several months. Mansfield prevailed on his junior colleague, Senator Lee Metcalf of Montana, to become the first permanent acting president pro tempore. Since Metcalf lived near the Capitol, he was willing to preside over late-night sessions and otherwise be on call. Metcalf retained the responsibility until his death in 1978. Since then, no other senator has held this title.

In 1977, following Minnesota Senator Hubert Humphrey's unsuccessful bid to become Senate majority leader, the Senate created the new post of deputy president pro tempore. The resolution provided that any senator who had previously held the post of president or vice president would serve as deputy president pro tempore, with a staff and salary increase, and the authorization to preside over the Senate and sign legislation in the absence of the vice president and



*President pro tempore Carl Hayden signed legislation as one of his duties as presiding officer of the Senate.*



*Lee Metcalf served as the first—and to date only—permanent acting president pro tempore.*

the president pro tempore. Humphrey held the post until his death the following year. In 1987, when President pro tempore John Stennis of Mississippi was in poor health, the Senate elected a younger senator, George J. Mitchell of Maine, to serve as deputy president pro tempore and to handle the functions of the office during Senator Stennis' absences. Mitchell performed those duties until his election as majority leader the next year, after which the post has remained vacant.

In 2001, the Senate was equally divided between Democrats and Republicans. During the period from January 3 to January 20, Vice President Al Gore presided and his tie-breaking vote gave the Democrats the majority, with Senator Robert C. Byrd serving as president pro tempore. With the inauguration of President George W. Bush, Dick Cheney became

vice president and his vote turned the majority over to the Republicans, making South Carolina Senator Strom Thurmond president pro tempore. In June 2001, Vermont Senator Jim Jeffords resigned from the Republican party and caucused with the Democrats, giving them the majority once again. Senator Byrd again became president pro tempore, and the Senate voted to designate Senator Thurmond as president pro tempore emeritus.

The office of president pro tempore remains one of the Senate's highest honors, a recognition of long and distinguished service. The president pro tempore plays an integral role in the day-to-day functioning of the Senate and stands in the line of presidential succession. A direct-access telephone to the White House symbolizes the special nature of the office and its significance for the nation.



## 75. Arthur Hendrick Vandenberg (*Michigan*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1947–1949

*Senate Service:* March 31, 1928, to April 18, 1951

*Party:* Republican

*Born:* Grand Rapids, Michigan, March 22, 1884

*Died:* Grand Rapids, Michigan, April 18, 1951

**Education:** Attended the public schools; studied law at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor.

**Non-Senate Career:** Between 1906 and 1928, Arthur H. Vandenberg was editor and publisher of the *Grand Rapids Herald* and the author of several books. During his Senate career, he was a delegate to the United Nations Conference at San Francisco in 1945 and also a delegate to the United Nations General Assembly at London and New York in 1946. That same year, he was United States adviser to the Council of Foreign Ministers at London, Paris, and New York. He served as a delegate to Pan American Conference at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1947.

**Senate Offices:** Republican Conference chairman (1945–1947)

**Committee Chair:** Enrolled Bills (1931–1933); Foreign Relations (1947–1949)

**Observations:** “Arthur Vandenberg achieved a position of distinction in the Republican Senate, in the 80th Congress, so that he was looked upon as the leader in the field of foreign policy, while Bob

Taft was looked upon as the leader in the Senate on the Republican side in domestic affairs. They got along really quite well. But Senator Vandenberg’s attitude toward the Senate generally was that they were entitled to know everything that he knew, that they could not make up their minds unless they were fully informed, so he did his best to keep them fully informed. It was a remarkable thing that usually when he spoke there were sixty or so senators on the floor to hear him. This is, of course, quite unusual in the Senate because normally people aren’t interested in hearing what senators have to say—unless they themselves are making a speech.”

~ Francis O. Wilcox, *Chief of Staff, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 1947–1955*, Oral History Interviews, Senate Historical Office (Washington, D.C., 1984), 50.

**Further Reading:** Tompkins, C. David. *Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg: The Evolution of a Modern Republican, 1884–1945*. Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1970; Vandenberg, Arthur H., Jr., and Morris, Joe Alex., eds. *The Private Papers of Senator Vandenberg*. 1952. Reprint. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1974.



## 76. Henry Styles Bridges (*New Hampshire*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1953–1955

*Senate Service:* January 3, 1937, to November 26, 1961

*Party:* Republican

*Born:* West Pembroke, Washington County, Maine, September 9, 1898

*Died:* East Concord, New Hampshire, November 26, 1961

**Education:** Attended the public schools; graduated from the University of Maine at Orono in 1918.

**Non-Senate Career:** Styles Bridges was an instructor at Sanderson Academy in Ashfield, Massachusetts, from 1918 to 1919, and then a member of the extension staff of the University of New Hampshire at Durham from 1921 to 1922. He was secretary of the New Hampshire Farm Bureau Federation from 1922 to 1923, editor of the *Granite Monthly* magazine from 1924 to 1926, and director and secretary of the New Hampshire Investment Co. from 1924 to 1929. In 1930, he became a member of the New Hampshire Public Service Commission, serving until 1934, when he became governor of New Hampshire. From 1925 to 1937, he was a lieutenant in the United States Army Reserve Corps.

**Senate Offices:** Minority leader (1952–1953); Republican Policy Committee chairman (1955–1961)

**Committee Chair:** Joint Committee on Foreign Economic Cooperation (1947–1949); Joint Committee on Inaugural Arrangements (1951–1953, 1955–1957); Appropriations (1947–1949, 1953–1955)

**Observations:** “While [Robert] Taft kept too busy with legislation to bother with routine political touches, Styles Bridges specialized in them. He was a prototype of the back-room politician who spoke out of the corner of his mouth, but he was a well-informed Senator and

one of the very few who had known in advance about the Manhattan Project that produced the atomic bomb. When Bridges stepped up to the ceremonial office of President Pro Tem, it left the position of Leader open to Taft in January 1953, as the new Eisenhower administration got underway.”

~ Richard Langham Reidel, *Halls of the Mighty: My 47 Years at the Senate* (Washington, D.C.: R. B. Luce, 1969), 148–49.

“Senator Bridges, as much as any man I have known and served with, understood government. He knew it as a method of order in man’s affairs. He rejected it as a means of ordering men. He served in government as a citizen duly elected to represent his fellow citizens. He rejected and opposed those who see in such service an opportunity to rule, regulate, or regiment. His life was dedicated to the central lesson, to the vital genius of the freedom which is the meaning of the American revolution, the essence of the American experience and the life of the American people.”

~ Senator Barry Goldwater, 1961, U.S. Senate Historical Office.

**Further Reading:** Kiepper, James J. *Styles Bridges: Yankee Senator*. Sugar Hill, NH: Phoenix Publishing, 2001; U.S. Congress. *Memorial Services for Henry S. Bridges*. 87th Cong., 2nd sess., 1962. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1962.





## 77. Walter Franklin George (Georgia)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1955–1957

*Senate Service:* November 22, 1922, to January 2, 1957

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Near Preston, Webster County, Georgia, January 29, 1878

*Died:* Vienna, Georgia, August 4, 1957

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**Education:** Attended the common schools; graduated from Mercer University, Macon, Georgia, in 1900 and from its law department in 1901.

**Non-Senate Career:** Walter F. George was admitted to the bar in 1901 and practiced law in Vienna, Georgia. He served as solicitor general of the Cordele judicial circuit of Georgia from 1907 until 1912 and then as judge of the superior court of the Cordele judicial circuit from 1912 until 1917. He was a judge of the state court of appeals from January to October 1917 and an associate justice of the state supreme court from 1917 until 1922. Following his Senate service, George served as President Dwight Eisenhower's special ambassador to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1957.

**Committee Chair:** Privileges and Elections (1933–1941); Foreign Relations (1939–1943, 1955–1957); Finance (1941–1947, 1949–1953); Joint Committee on Internal Revenue Taxation (1949–1953); Select Committee on Case Influence (1955–1957); Special Committee on Foreign Assistance (1955–1957)

**Observations:** “I would say he did not have a commanding presence, but he had a commanding voice. When Walter George spoke, senators listened. They came to the floor to hear what he had to say. I did not have much experience with him in the way of drafting statements or making suggestions. George was his own man. He commanded the respect of other senators.”

~ Carl M. Marcy, *Chief of Staff, Foreign Relations Committee, 1955–1973*, Oral History Interviews, Senate Historical Office (Washington, D.C., 1983), 69.

**Further Reading:** Mellichamp, Josephine. “Walter George.” In *Senators From Georgia*. Huntsville, AL: Strode Publishers, 1976: 230–39; Zeigler, Luther. “Senator Walter George’s 1938 Campaign.” *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 43 (December 1959): 333–52; Fleissner, James P. “August 11, 1938: A Day in the Life of Senator Walter F. George.” *Journal of Southern Legal History* 9 (2001): 55–101.



## 78. Carl Trumbull Hayden (*Arizona*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1957–1969

*Senate Service:* March 4, 1927, to January 3, 1969

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Hayden's Ferry (now Tempe), Maricopa County, Arizona, October 2, 1877

*Died:* Mesa, Arizona, January 25, 1972

**Education:** Attended the public schools; graduated from the Normal School of Arizona at Tempe in 1896; attended Leland Stanford Junior University, California 1896–1900.

**Non-Senate Career:** Carl Hayden helped run his father's business in Tempe, Arizona, from 1900 to 1904. He was a member of Tempe's town council from 1902 to 1904, and served as treasurer of Maricopa County from 1904 to 1906. He became sheriff of Maricopa County in 1907 and served until 1912, when he successfully ran for election to the U.S. House of Representatives. He served in the House from February 19, 1912, to March 3, 1927, before becoming a U.S. senator. During the First World War, Hayden was commissioned a major of infantry in the United States Army.

**Committee Chair:** Printing (1933–1947); Rules and Administration (1949–1953); co-chairman, Joint Committee on Printing (1949–1953, 1955–1969); co-chairman, Joint Committee on Inaugural Arrangements (1947–1949, 1951–1953); Appropriations (1955–1969)

**Observations:** "When Sheriff [Carl] Hayden arrived in Washington as Arizona's first Representative, he early established himself as a faithful party man; from Wilson's New Freedom, through F.D.R.'s New Deal and Harry Truman's Fair Deal to John Kennedy's New Frontier, Carl Hayden generally voted straight down the Democratic line. Most of his work is in committee—and in taking care of the folks back home in Arizona. He has a reputation for quick, effective replies to constituents'

letters. Through his efforts and influence on the Appropriations Committee, Arizona has received vast federal funds for dams and irrigation projects, military bases and airfields, Indian school construction, special social-security payments and fish hatcheries. Says Vice President Lyndon Johnson: 'Carl Hayden has smiled through untold millions for the people of Arizona.'"

~ "Old Frontiersman," *Time Magazine* (February 9, 1962): 15.

**Further Reading:** August, Jack L., Jr. *Vision in the Desert: Carl Hayden and Hydropolitics in the American Southwest*. Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1998; Rice, Ross R. *Carl Hayden: Builder of the American West*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1994.



## 79. Richard Brevard Russell, Jr. (*Georgia*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1969–1971

*Senate Service:* January 12, 1933, to January 21, 1971

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Winder, Barrow County, Georgia, November 2, 1897

*Died:* Washington, D.C., January 21, 1971

**Education:** Attended the public schools; graduated from the Seventh District Agricultural and Mechanical School, Powder Springs, Georgia, in 1914; from the Gordon Institute, Barnesville, Georgia, in 1915; and from the law department of the University of Georgia at Athens in 1918.

**Non-Senate Career:** Richard B. Russell served in the United States Naval Reserve in 1918. Admitted to the bar in 1919, he then practiced law in Winder, Georgia. Russell was a member of the Georgia state house of representatives from 1921 until 1931, serving as speaker from 1927 until 1931. He was governor of Georgia, from 1931 until 1933, prior to his U.S. Senate service.

**Committee Chair:** Immigration (1937–1947); Manufactures (1945–1947); Armed Services (1951–1953, 1955–1969); Appropriations (1969–1971)

**Observations:** “Senator Russell was a patrician type, respected for his knowledge of the rules and precedents and for his enduring good judgment. Never going out of his way to develop a friendship of acquaintance, he, nevertheless, was easy to talk with. I would sometimes ask him about the rules or customs of the Senate and would seek his judgment on some key issues. Urbane and scholarly, he was not an orator. He was courtly and polite, never overly partisan.”

~ U.S. Congress, Senate, *The Senate, 1789–1989, Addresses on the History of the United States Senate*, by Robert C. Byrd, vol. 2, S. Doc. 100–20, 100th Cong., 1st sess., 1991, 559.

**Further Reading:** Fite, Gilbert C. *Richard B. Russell, Jr., Senator From Georgia*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991; Goldsmith, John A. *Colleagues: Richard B. Russell and His Apprentice, Lyndon B. Johnson*. Washington, D.C.: Seven Locks Press, 1993.



## 80. Allen Joseph Ellender (*Louisiana*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1971–1972

*Senate Service:* January 3, 1937, to July 27, 1972

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Montegut, Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana, September 24, 1890

*Died:* Bethesda Naval Hospital, Bethesda, Maryland, July 27, 1972

**Education:** Attended the public and private schools; graduated from St. Aloysius College, New Orleans, Louisiana, in 1909, and from the law department of Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana, 1913.

**Non-Senate Career:** Allen Ellender was admitted to the bar in 1913 and practiced law in Houma, Louisiana. He was city attorney of Houma from 1913 to 1915 and district attorney of Terrebonne Parish from 1915 to 1916. During the First World War, he served as a sergeant in the Artillery Corps, United States Army, from 1917 to 1918. He was a delegate to the constitutional convention of Louisiana in 1921 and a Democratic national committeeman from Louisiana in 1939–1940. He was a member of the state house of representatives from 1924 to 1936, serving as floor leader from 1928 to 1932, and as speaker from 1932 to 1936.

**Committee Chair:** Claims (1943–1947); Agriculture and Forestry (1951–1953, 1955–1971); Appropriations (1971–1972)

**Observations:** “He was a Senator of the old school. He believed in our seniority system. He believed that a freshman Senator should start at the bottom and spend some time there before he undertook to educate his colleagues. . . . In that fashion he proceeded to serve on the Committee on Agriculture and Forestry until he became its chairman. After 12 years in this body he sought, in his turn, membership on the Committee on Appropriations, and he served there until he became chairman of the committee. He served in this body until by right of seniority he became President pro tempore.”

~ Senator Russell Long, U.S. Congress, Senate, *Congressional Record*, 92nd Cong., 2d sess., 25815–16.

**Further Reading:** Becnel, Thomas A. *Senator Allen Ellender of Louisiana: A Biography*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996; U.S. Congress. *Memorial Services*. 92nd Cong., 2d sess. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1974.



## 81. James Oliver Eastland (*Mississippi*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1972–1978

*Senate Service:* June 30, 1941, to September 28, 1941; January 3, 1943, to December 27, 1978

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Doddsville, Mississippi, November 28, 1904

*Died:* Doddsville, Mississippi, February 19, 1986

**Education:** Attended the public schools, the University of Mississippi at Oxford, Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, and the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa; studied law.

**Non-Senate Career:** James O. Eastland was admitted to the Mississippi bar in 1927 and practiced law in Forest, Mississippi, while also engaging in agricultural pursuits. He was a member of the state house of representatives from 1928 until 1932, prior to his U.S. Senate service.

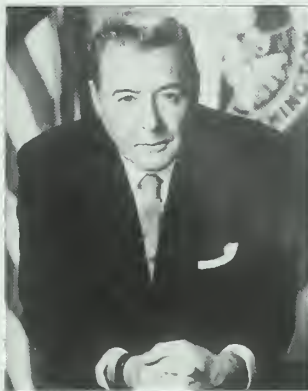
**Committee Chair:** Judiciary (1955–1978)

**Observations:** “In quiet recognition of the new times, Eastland has abandoned most of the old powers of his committee chairmanship, leaving subcommittee chairmen . . . freedom to do most of what they

liked. In a similar way, Eastland chose not to make much out of his ceremonial post as president pro tempore of the Senate. What prerogatives that position did provide he generally shared with the majority leader and others. Eastland has remained a living caricature of the southern senator: white hair, stooped shuffle, everpresent big cigar. He still speaks with one of the thickest accents in town, talking recently, for example, of the ‘Panydaw Canal.’”

~ *Washington Post*, March 23, 1978.

**Further Reading:** Schlauch, Wolfgang. “Representative William Colmer and Senator James O. Eastland and the Reconstruction of Germany, 1945.” *Journal of Mississippi History* 34 (August 1972): 193–213; Zellner, Dorothy M. “Red Roadshow: Eastland in New Orleans, 1954.” *Louisiana History* 33 (Winter 1992): 31–60.



## 82. Warren Grant Magnuson (*Washington*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1979–1981

*Senate Service:* December 14, 1944, to January 3, 1981

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Moorhead, Clay County, Minnesota, April 12, 1905

*Died:* Seattle, Washington, May 20, 1989

**Education:** Attended the public schools, the University of North Dakota at Grand Forks, and North Dakota State College; graduated from the University of Washington in 1926, and from the law school in 1929.

**Non-Senate Career:** Warren Magnuson practiced law in Seattle, Washington, and served as secretary of the Seattle Municipal League in 1930 and 1931. He was special prosecuting attorney of King County, Washington, in 1931 and a member of the state house of representatives from 1933 to 1934. In 1933, he was a delegate to the state constitutional convention. He was appointed United States district attorney in 1934 and served as prosecuting attorney of King County, Washington, from 1934 to 1936. He successfully ran for the U.S. House of Representatives in 1936 and served from January 3, 1937, to December 13, 1944. During the Second World War, he served in the U.S. Navy, attaining the rank of lieutenant commander.

**Committee Chair:** Interstate and Foreign Commerce (1955–1963); Commerce (1963–1949); Commerce, Science and Transportation (1977–1979); Appropriations (1977–1981)

**Observations:** “Within the Democratic Party structure of the Senate, the President Pro Tem had been included as part of the ‘leadership.’ The Democratic Caucus has a steering committee that performs many of the functions that the Rules Committee on the House side performs, of scheduling legislation and making up priorities. Well, Magnuson had been on the steering committee of the Senate for quite some time, about twenty years or better. So when he became President Pro Tem there was some debate as to whether he would get two votes or what the deal would be. It was more than pro forma because there were other interests within the Democratic membership of the Senate that wanted to add another member if they could. So that was another function that the President Pro Tem might have.”

~ Warren Featherstone Reid, *Assistant to Warren G. Magnuson*, Oral History Interviews, Senate Historical Office (Washington, D.C., 1981), 172.

**Further Reading:** Magnuson, Warren G., and Elliot A. Segal. *How Much for Health?* Washington, D.C.: R. B. Luce, 1974; Scates, Shelby. *Warren G. Magnuson and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century America.* Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997.



## 83. Milton Ruben Young (*North Dakota*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1980

*Senate Service:* March 12, 1945, to January 3, 1981

*Party:* Republican

*Born:* Berlin, La Moure County, North Dakota, December 6, 1897

*Died:* Sun City, Arizona, May 31, 1983

**Education:** Attended the public schools of La Moure County; attended the North Dakota State Agricultural College at Fargo and Graceland College in Lamoni, Iowa.

**Non-Senate Career:** Milton R. Young engaged in agricultural pursuits near Berlin, North Dakota. In 1932, he was elected to the North Dakota house of representatives, and in 1934, he was elected to the state senate, where he served until he was appointed to the U.S. Senate in 1945.

**Observations:** “In a body where so much substantial activity is accompanied by a carnival of contention with a spotlight on discord, Milton Young deserves special credit for utilizing his influence as the longest-seated member on both the Appropriations and Agriculture Committees to accomplish so much with a minimum of disruption. During his tenure

as ranking Republican on these committees his experience and leadership served as a pillar of strength to his constituents and congressional colleagues. He has a great sense of what is right for this country and the success of his legislation is a further reflection of the high degree of respect his convictions receive from both sides of the aisle.”

~ Senator Bob Dole, U.S. Congress, Senate, *Congressional Record*, 96th Cong., 2d sess., 52424.

**Further Reading:** U.S. Congress. *Memorial Addresses and Other Tributes in the Congress of the United States on the Life and Contributions of Milton R. Young*. 98th Cong., 1st sess. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1983.



## 84. James Strom Thurmond (*South Carolina*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1981–1987, 1995–2001

*Senate Service:* December 24, 1954, to January 3, 1955; November 7, 1956, to January 3, 2003

*Party:* Democrat, Republican

*Born:* Edgefield, South Carolina, December 5, 1902

*Died:* Edgefield, South Carolina, June 26, 2003

*Education:* Attended the public schools; graduated from Clemson College in 1923; studied law.

*Non-Senate Career:* Strom Thurmond taught in South Carolina high schools from 1923 to 1929. He was Edgefield County superintendent of education from 1929 to 1933. After he was admitted to the South Carolina bar in 1930, he served as city and county attorney until 1938, and simultaneously served in the state senate from 1933 to 1938. He was appointed circuit judge in 1938, serving until 1946, and served in the U.S. Army from 1942 to 1946, in Europe and in the Pacific. Following the war, he became a major general in the U.S. Army Reserve. Thurmond was governor of South Carolina from 1947 to 1951. He ran unsuccessfully for president of the United States in 1948 as a States Rights candidate, and was an unsuccessful candidate for the Democratic nomination for U.S. senator in 1950. He practiced law in Aiken, South Carolina, from 1951 to 1955, before successfully winning election to the U.S. Senate.

*Senate Offices:* President pro tempore emeritus (2001–2003)

*Committee Chair:* Judiciary (1981–1987); Armed Services (1995–1997)

*Observations:* “When I served with him on the Judiciary Committee I found him to be very wise. One of the comments he made soon after I joined the committee, when a judge was up for confirmation, was asking the nominee if the nominee promised to be courteous. You thought that was sort of a meaningless question until Senator Thurmond followed up after the nominee said yes by saying, ‘The more power a person has the more courteous that person should be.’ There is a lot of wisdom in that short statement. Whenever Senator Thurmond is not present and I am, I make that statement to the nominees.”

~ Senator Arlen Specter in U.S. Senate, Office of the Secretary, *Tributes Delivered in Congress: Strom Thurmond, United States Senator*, S. Doc. 105–9, 105th Cong., 1st sess., 5.

*Further Reading:* Cohodas, Nadine. *Strom Thurmond & the Politics of Southern Change*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1994.





## 85. John Cornelius Stennis (*Mississippi*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1987–1989

*Senate Service:* November 5, 1947, to January 3, 1989

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* Near De Kalb, Kemper County, Mississippi, August 3, 1901

*Died:* Jackson, Mississippi, April 23, 1995

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**Education:** Attended the county schools; graduated from Mississippi State College in 1923; graduated from University of Virginia Law School in 1928.

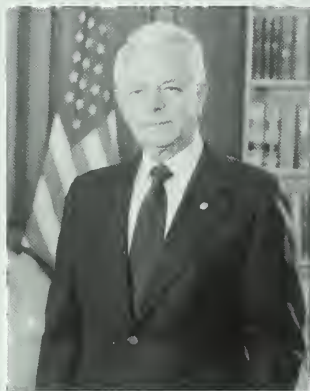
**Non-Senate Career:** John C. Stennis was admitted to the bar in 1928 and practiced law in De Kalb, Mississippi. He served as a member of the Mississippi state house of representatives from 1928 until 1932. He was elected district prosecuting attorney in 1932 and was a circuit judge from 1937 until 1947.

**Committee Chair:** Select Committee on Standards and Conduct (1965–1975); Armed Services (1969–1981); Appropriations (1989–1989)

**Observations:** “Now 85 and the last of the old southern Democratic barons in the Senate, the gentle Mississippian is the chamber’s dean and will be its president pro tempore and chairman of its Appropriations Committee when the Senate convenes next month under Democratic control. His weathered face is drawn now and his body is frail, but his eyes still dance brightly as he talks of his love for the Senate and his hopes for its future. ‘Every day is a new challenge. . . . You move ahead as best you can,’ he said from the wheelchair to which he has been confined since the amputation of a cancerous leg a year ago. . . . But he has lost none of his prodigious zest for work, which means arriving at the office around 8 a.m. and staying until the Senate shuts down, which can be late at night. In respect for Senate tradition and decorum, he tries to stand to address the chamber, difficult as it is to do.”

~ *Washington Post*, December 23, 1986.

**Further Reading:** Downs, Michael Scott. “Advice and Consent: John Stennis and the Vietnam War, 1954–1973.” *Journal of Mississippi History* 55 (May 1993): 87–114; Allen, William C. “Senators Poindexter, Davis, and Stennis: Three Mississippians in the History of the United States Capitol.” *Journal of Mississippi History* 65 (2003): 191–214.



## 86. Robert Carlyle Byrd (*West Virginia*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 1989–1995, 2001–2003, 2007–present

*Senate Service:* January 3, 1959, to present

*Party:* Democrat

*Born:* North Wilkesboro, Wilkes County, North Carolina, November 20, 1917

**Education:** Attended West Virginia public schools; student at Beckley College, Concord College, Morris Harvey College, and Marshall College, all in West Virginia, and George Washington University Law School in Washington, D.C.; graduated, American University Law School, 1963; received bachelor's degree in political science from Marshall University, 1994.

**Non-Senate Career:** Robert Byrd served in the West Virginia house of delegates from 1947 to 1950. Following one term in West Virginia's state senate, from 1951 to 1952, he ran successfully for a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives, where he served from January 3, 1953, to January 3, 1959.

**Senate Career:** Senator Robert Byrd is currently the longest serving senator in U.S. history.

**Senate Offices:** Secretary, Senate Democratic Conference (1967–1971); Democratic whip (1971–1977); majority leader (1977–1980, 1987–1988); minority leader (1981–1986)

**Committee Chair:** Committee on Appropriations (1989–1995, 2001–2003, 2007–)

**Observations:** “As I said in 1980, long before I attained the post myself, ‘the election of a senator to the office of the president pro tempore has always been considered one of the highest honors offered to a senator by the Senate as a body.’ As I trust my remarks have indicated, that honor has been bestowed upon a colorful and significant group of senators during the past two centuries—men who stamped their imprint upon the office and upon their times. I am proud to join their ranks and to perform the duties of president pro tempore of the United States Senate.”

~ Senator Robert C. Byrd, U.S. Congress, Senate, *The Senate, 1789–1989, Addresses on the History of the United States Senate*, by Robert C. Byrd, vol. 2, S. Doc. 100–20, 100th Cong., 1st sess., 1991, 183.

**Further Reading:** U.S. Congress. Senate. *The Senate, 1789–1989*, 4 vols., by Robert C. Byrd. S. Doc. 100–20, 100th Cong., 1st sess., 1989–1994. Vols. 1 and 2, *Addresses on the History of the United States Senate*; Vol. 3, *Classic Speeches, 1830–1993*; Vol. 4, *Historical Statistics, 1789–1992*; U.S. Congress. Senate. *The Senate of the Roman Republic: Addresses on the History of Roman Constitutionalism*, by Robert C. Byrd. S. Doc. 103–23, 103rd Cong., 2d sess., 1995; Byrd, Robert C. *Child of the Appalachian Coalfields*. Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2005.



## 87. Theodore F. (Ted) Stevens (*Alaska*)

*President Pro Tempore:* 2003–2007

*Senate Service:* December 24, 1968, to present

*Party:* Republican

*Born:* Indianapolis, Marion County, Indiana, November 18, 1923

*Education:* Attended Oregon State College and Montana State College; graduated from University of California, Los Angeles, in 1947; graduated from Harvard Law School in 1950.

*Non-Senate Career:* During the Second World War, Ted Stevens served in the United States Army Air Corps in China. He was admitted to the bar in California in 1950, to the District of Columbia bar in 1951, and to the Alaska bar in 1957. He practiced law in Fairbanks, Alaska. In 1956, he became a legislative counsel in the Department of Interior in Washington, D.C. He was assistant to the secretary of the interior in 1958 and chief counsel in the Department of the Interior in 1960. Prior to his U.S. Senate service, Stevens was a member of the Alaska state house of representatives from 1964 until 1968, serving as speaker pro tempore and majority leader.

*Senate Offices:* Republican whip (1977–1985); chair, Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee (1975–1977)

*Committee Chair:* Select Committee on Ethics (1983–1987); Rules and Administration (January 3, 1995–September 12, 1995); Governmental Affairs (September 12, 1995–January 2, 1997); Appropriations (1997–2001; January 20, 2001–June 6, 2001; 2003–2005); Commerce, Science and Transportation (2005–2007)

*Observations:* “Senator Stevens and I have worked together in the Senate since 1968, and we have been on the Senate Appropriations Committee together since 1972. In all this time together, I have always known Senator Ted Stevens to be an outstanding Senator, a great colleague, and a trusted friend. Oh, I realize he may grumble every now and then. He is getting a little bit grumbly. But you can forgive him for that. You never have to be concerned about turning your back on him. He is honest. He is straightforward. And his word is his bond. Over the years we have had our spats, but never once did I doubt our friendship, our admiration for this country, its flag, each other, and our ability to work together.”

~ Senator Robert C. Byrd, U.S. Congress, Senate, *Congressional Record*, 109th Cong., 1st sess., S13311.



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*President Pro Tem. Ferry Administering the Oath of Office to Vice-President Wheeler in the Senate Chamber, March 5th*, Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, 03/24/1877, U.S. Senate Collection

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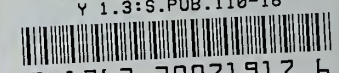
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